

RSC

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SHAKESPEARE
COMPANY

HOUSE OF DESIRES

Third
Golden Age

SOR JUANA INÉS DE LA CRUZ IN A NEW TRANSLATION BY CATHERINE BOYLE



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2004

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SICS

HOUSE OF DESIRES



Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

HOUSE OF DESIRES

in a new translation by Catherine Boyle

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WOMEN OF THE WORLD

THEIR HISTORY AND PRESENT POSITION

THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD

THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD



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The Royal Shakespeare Company is one of the world's best known theatre ensembles, which aims to create outstanding theatre relevant to our times. The RSC is at the leading edge of classical theatre, with an international reputation for artistic excellence, accessibility and high quality live performance.

The Spanish Golden Age celebrates one of the most dynamic, energetic and stylish periods of world drama that is, astonishingly, hardly known to any of us. The four neglected plays from 17th century Spain which the RSC chose to present dramatised our fascination with the themes of seduction, honour and revenge.

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This production of *House Of Desires* was first performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company in the Swan Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, on 30 June 2004.

The original cast was as follows:

William Buckhurst	Don Pedro
James Chalmers	Cloaked Man
Claire Cox	Doña Ana
Julius D'Silva	Hernando
Rebecca Johnson	Doña Leonor
Katherine Kelly	Celia
Joseph Millson	Don Carlos
Vinta Morgan	Cloaked Man
Emma Pallant	Nun
Oscar Pearce	Don Juan
Peter Sproule	Don Rodrigo
Simon Trinder	Castaño
Joanna Van Kampen	Nun

All other parts played by members of the Company

Directed by	Nancy Meckler
New translation by	Catherine Boyle
Designed by	Katrina Lindsay
Season stage designed by	Es Devlin
Lighting designed by	Ben Ormerod
Music composed by	Ilona Sekacz
Sound designed by	Martin Slavin
Movement by	Liz Ranken
Fights directed by	Malcolm Ranson
Assistant Director	Tom Daley
Music Director	Michael Tubbs
Voice and dialect work by	Jeannette Nelson
Casting Director	John Cannon cdb
Production Manager	Pete Griffin
Costume Supervisor	Sabine Lemaitre
Company Manager	Jondon
Stage Manager	Zöe Donegan
Deputy Stage Manager	Gabrielle Sanders
Assistant Stage Manager	Ruth Taylor

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Introduction

The Court and the Convent: The Trials of Seeing and Being Seen

Los empeños de una casa (*House of Desires*; literally, *The Trials of a Noble House*) was first performed in 1683 at court in Mexico City in homage to the viceregal couple, and to celebrate the entry into Mexico City of the new Archbishop. It was written as a *festejo*, a festival and celebration, of which the three acts that form the play itself are only a part. *El festejo de los empeños de una casa* is believed to be the only example of this type of Baroque event to have survived in its entirety, and as such it gives us an intriguing insight into the complex world that Sor Juana inhabited.

Following established form, it opens with a *loa* (a brief piece, normally in praise of a saint or a newly-arrived dignitary), has a *sainete* (a short interlude) between the acts, and ends with a *sarao*, a type of masquerade with music and dance. What Sor Juana does with this exuberant theatrical feast is majestic: the opening *loa* has the allegorical characters Merit, Diligence, Fortune and Chance compete to establish which is the greatest of all joys; the first *sainete* has the entities of courtly gallantry – Love, Respect, Deference, Courtesy and Hope – enter into a contest to find out who best deserves women's disdain; in the second *sainete* she has hecklers boo and hiss the performance and ask for the author to be garroted; and alongside the customary songs and poetry in praise of the viceregal couple and their family, she sets the 'Masquerade of the Four Nations: Spanish, Africans, Italians, Mexicans', which develops a complex commentary on the relationships between the 'old' and the 'new' worlds. The sheer range of the pieces is remarkable, but what is quite breathtaking is the way in which Sor Juana controls the themes, the language, and the symbolic imagery (ranging from the Classics to the indigenous Mexican) in order to create a commentary on the themes of the three acts of the play itself, as well as on the world of the seventeenth century.

Theatre played an important role in the colonisation of the Americas. It had been used from the earliest conquest as a means of evangelisation, and there had also developed dramatic representations that brought together western Christian traditions and pre-Columbian ritual. During the sixteenth century theatre had a home in missions, schools, convents and the court, and was performed on feast days and to celebrate public events. The popularity of religious theatre paved the way for secular theatre, and by the seventeenth century touring companies were regularly visiting from Spain and theatre houses were built in Mexico and Lima. There were, as in Spain, *corrales públicos*, where most plays were Spanish, as were the actors and authors, so the works of the Spanish Golden Age were performed and the forms assimilated by the small group of Baroque dramatists.

It is extraordinary, as the Mexican poet Octavio Paz noted, that the greatest figure of the colonial period in Latin America was a woman. Yet, perhaps it is even more extraordinary that she is such a perfect representative of her time. Yes, perhaps a *rara avis*, an exotic and singular bird, but also quintessentially the embodiment of the new *criollo* classes, the new Latin Americans, who took on and imitated so much of what came from Spain, but who were beginning already to look beyond it. The Baroque in New Spain grew midst this aspiring *criollo* population. These were the people who, through their education and skill, would look to the Church, the professions, the new bureaucracies and to trade to secure a place in society. In the work of Sor Juana and her most notable contemporaries there is a vivid and often dense complexity, for which the aesthetics of the Baroque allowed a framework for expression. The forms are imitated, but what is written into them is the sensibility of those inhabiting the 'new world', with its wondrous natural realities, its complex social and racial structures, and its emergent identities, which had not yet been fully recognised or classified. It is the work of Calderón de la Barca that seems to have created the greatest resonance in this cultural atmosphere.

Calderón's cloak and dagger comedies offered a form that must have been irresistible to Sor Juana: she could display her verbal ingenuity, she could reap havoc with ridiculously complex

plots played at vertiginous speed, with complex staging and the integrated use of music. Above all, perhaps, it was a theatre that was perfectly suited to the court, which was her only audience. And Sor Juana rarely took her eyes off her audience: she ardently sought out the places for communication, where she could exercise her intellect, wit, and her mischievous humour.

For *House of Desires* wears its fun-making on its sleeve. In her title Sor Juana has changed one syllable of a cloak and dagger comedy by Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *Los empeños de un acaso* (*The Trials of Chance*) and succeeds immediately in creating an ironic gesture towards her literary and dramatic masters. She will take this further in the second interlude, in which she has her characters discuss the superiority of Spanish imports, which, they say, are lighter on the digestion. And while they lament the poor quality of the present play (which Sor Juana shamelessly attributes to one of her contemporaries) they praise a recent play called *Celestina*, a reference to a play co-authored by Sor Juana. They label it as *mestiza* (of mixed race) – an uneven affair, lacking in design, but written with wit. Writing from her convent, invisible at the performance of the play, Sor Juana writes herself into it: she forces us to see her.

In 1683 Sor Juana was at her most assured. She had managed to create an excellent intellectual space and, despite being in a convent, was fast becoming the most important literary and intellectual figure of her time. Such was her confidence in these years that in 1681 she wrote a 'Spiritual Self Defence' challenging and finally dismissing her confessor, Father Antonio Núñez de Miranda. In this extraordinary letter (which anticipates, but in its unguarded vehemence, goes far beyond the later 'Response'), Sor Juana attacks Núñez de Miranda for his disapproval of her 'black verses', born, she says, solely from the fact that she is a woman. Acknowledging the prohibition against women studying in public alongside men, she demands to know who has forbidden private study: 'Do women not have a rational soul like men? Then, why should they not also enjoy the privilege of the enlightenment of letters? Is a woman's soul not as open to God's grace and glory as a man's? Then, why should it not be open to learning and sciences, which are lesser than the glories of God? What

divine revelation, what ruling of reason created such a severe law for us?' She demands guidance as to how to deal with her unsolicited fame and attention, and compares her obedience to the commands of the viceregal court to her confessor's. All of this is to draw attention to the space she occupied, where she is constantly being pressured to change her nature, even her writing, in order to be more like women: 'for even having reasonably good handwriting has cost me great and wearying persecutions, simply because they said that my writing looked like a man's and that it was not decent, with which they forced me to deform it purposefully, and the whole community [the convent] is a witness to this.' In her portrait of her persecution for verses and learning, for being the object of unsolicited 'vulgar celebration and applause', Sor Juana insists, 'I was born with these gifts, and with them I shall die.'

It is this spirit that Sor Juana writes into Leonor. Yet Leonor has found correspondence in love: she loves and is loved. She sees and is seen. Sor Juana does not find the same correspondence, for there seem to be no like beings, and she will remain an object of applause on one hand, and of envy and persecution on the other. Sor Juana is a proud performer, who seeks a correspondence to legitimate and validate her being, a community that will allow her to be herself. The contradiction at the heart of her life is that she does become famous for all the things she cherished. Yet this is within a framework especially designed for her: she was named 'The Tenth Muse', a category designed to name woman as anomaly. In the Baroque festival of which *House of Desires* is a part, Sor Juana saw her audience, and was challenging her audience to see her, and acknowledge the wry and ironic gaze she cast on her world.

This translation has sought to keep the play alive by matching its pace and changes of rhythm, and by maintaining the intrinsic orality of the story-telling, especially in the early long monologues. In rehearsal we pared down some of what I had come to call 'Sor Juana's indulgences': those moments when she turns on an idea, obviously savouring the linguistic game and conceits it suggests, particularly around notions of honour, jealousy and correspondence in love. This takes us to the heart

of the different theatre experiences three centuries apart. In the Baroque festival, the fact that the play was one element among so many others shapes the nature of the relationship to the dialogue, not least in terms of the perceived need to recap time and again on the intricacies of the plot. For the audience was unlikely to have listened to every word, relying more on the visual and on gestures, and this, ironically perhaps, gives an author like Sor Juana scope for verbal pyrotechnics. In a modern theatre environment with a seated audience and where listening to and understanding the dialogue are much more central, the need for repetition is less, and the variations on ideas for their linguistic potential seem much more suited to the page than the stage. For the wit and ingenuity of Sor Juana's words on the page I guide the reader to her lyrical and religious poetry, her 'Response to Sor Filotea', and to her wonderful and demanding masterpiece, 'Primero Sueño', 'First Dream'.

Life of Sor (Sister) Juana Inés de la Cruz

Juana Ramírez de Asbaje (1651–95) was born in San Miguel Nepantla, near Mexico City. Her mother was a *criolla* (of Spanish descent born in New Spain, as Mexico was then known) and her father Basque. That they were not legally married, and that her father quickly disappeared, cast a shadow over certain aspects of Juana's life, not least the creation of a stable place in society. The little information we have about her early years comes from 'The Response', her famous defence of women's right to learning, in which she talks of her 'inclination' towards letters 'from the first light of reason', illustrating this with evocative anecdotes: how, at the age of three, she followed her sister to a girls' school and persuaded the schoolmistress to teach her to read, which she did 'in a short space of time'; how she stopped eating cheese for its damaging effects on the brain, and would cut her hair as a useless adornment when she failed in her learning; how, at the age of six or seven, on learning that there existed in Mexico City schools and universities, she tried to persuade her mother to allow her to disguise herself as a boy so that she

could attend; and of how, on not being able to do so, she read from her grandfather's library, learning so much that people were amazed by her knowledge 'at an age when many have not even learned to speak well'.

At the age of about eight, Juana was sent to the home of relatives in Mexico City, where she stayed until her presentation at the court of the new viceregal couple in 1664. She very quickly became a favourite of the vicereine, Leonor Carreto, and in this vibrant environment of festivals, ceremony and coquetry Juana shone. This was the first in a series of important relationships with viceroys; It was a later vicereine, the Countess of Paredes, who backed the first publication of Sor Juana's work in Spain (*Castalian Inundation*, 1689). The fame of her learning was such that in 1664 the viceroy put her to the test against forty learned men of the city, whose questions, he later said, she demolished 'like a royal galleon defending itself against a few rowing boats'.

In 1667 Juana made her first attempt to take the veil when she entered the Convent of the Barefoot Carmelites. But she left after only a few months, for this order did not provide the environment she sought, and in 1669 she entered the Convent of Saint Paula of the Order of St Jerome, where she stayed until her death. Of her decision to become a nun, Sor Juana said that 'although I knew that this life had many things that were repugnant to my nature...it was less than the abhorrence I felt for marriage'. In fact, the convent was the only space possible for a woman who wanted to pursue a life of learning and writing, and the Hieronymite Order allowed her a high level of autonomy. Most of her writing, both sacred and secular, and often on commission, dates from her years in the convent.

The relatively lax regime of the Hieronymites allowed her to receive visits, and from behind the convent grille she held what might best be described as 'salons', where she discoursed with the most learned men of the period. It was in this setting that she delivered a brilliant challenge to a famous sermon on the greatest acts of love by Jesus Christ. She was asked by the Bishop of Puebla to write it, and in 1690 he published it (according to Sor

Juana without her consent) as the 'Letter Worthy of the Wisdom of Athena', with a preface in which, using the pseudonym Sor Filotea, he advises her to devote herself to areas of study befitting a nun. Shaken by what she saw as an act of betrayal, Sor Juana waited three months before she delivered her 'Response of the Poetess to the Most Illustrious Sor Filotea', a virtuoso defence of the right of woman to an intellectual life, deftly matching the autobiographical with a dazzling account of female learning and a defiant decoding of men's (and the Church's) attitudes towards women of letters.

Yet, the 'Response' is also an act of contrition, for she understood that she was answering to the hierarchy of the Church, and that she would soon be forced into silence. It was Sor Juana's last significant work. Soon after, she gave up her extensive library and renounced her earthly ways. She retook her vows, signing her protestation of faith in blood. And she prepared, and again signed in blood, her death certificate, asking her sisters to fill in the date of the death of 'the worst woman that has ever been, I, the worst in the world'. She died on 17 April 1695 in an outbreak of the plague.

Acknowledgements

During the academic year 2003–04 I have been on sabbatical from King's College London. In a piece of perfect timing I became involved in the development of this season and in this translation, and have rediscovered the delight of the intense learning experience. My thanks are due to the RSC and Laurence Boswell for this celebration of the 'Spanish' Golden Age. I am grateful to Nancy Meckler and Paul Sirett for encouraging me to take on the translation and for their meticulous reading of the drafts. It was then a delight to see the company putting their growing understanding of the codes of seventeenth-century drama to work on this play. The season allowed for productive collaboration with colleagues Jack Sage, Jonathan Thacker and, latterly, Kathleen Mountjoy. Through their enthusiasm for this project and their commitment to our shared intellectual space, Julian Weiss and my graduate students at King's have supported me throughout this year. This translation has involved an act of intense research and reading, and I owe an immense debt to the many wonderful scholars of Sor Juana's work, who are too many to mention here, but to whose work I turn over and again in order to understand her language and her world. I hope I do it some justice in these pages. Present in my mind throughout were Gaynor Macfarlane and Julie Bleha with whom, more than a decade ago, I took my first steps in the discovery of the dramatic richness of all aspects of Sor Juana's writing. And Maria, Christina and Dominic have shared it all with me in so many ways.

Catherine Boyle
May 2004

Characters

(in order of appearance)

DOÑA ANA,

A noble woman, sister to Don Pedro, loved by
Don Juan, in love with Don Carlos

CELIA,

Maid servant to Doña Ana

CLOAKED MEN

DOÑA LEONOR,

A noble woman, in love with Don Carlos

DON CARLOS,

A noble man, in love with Doña Leonor,
pursued by Doña Ana

CASTAÑO,

Man servant to Don Carlos

DON PEDRO,

A noble man, brother to Doña Ana, in love with
Doña Leonor

DON RODRIGO,

A noble man, father of Doña Leonor

HERNANDO,

Man servant to Don Rodrigo

DON JUAN,

A noble man, in love with Doña Ana

MUSICIANS

for
Maria, Christina and Dominic
and
Gaynor and Julie

DAY ONE

Scene One

Toledo. In the home of DON PEDRO.

DOÑA ANA and CELIA enter.

DOÑA ANA: Celia, tonight we must wait until my brother returns.

CELIA: Then it'll be a long wait.

He thinks he's early if he's home by two.

I tell you, madam, you'll be lucky
if you see him before dawn.

But why this sudden desire to wait up for him?

DOÑA ANA: Celia, his trust in me is so great
that tonight he opened his heart to me.
As you know, he left Madrid two years ago
and came here to Toledo
to recover a debt.

He thought to return at once,
so he left me at Court,
where I, alone,
seeing and being seen,
was seen by Don Juan,
and I saw him.

He courted me ardently,
and I responded to his constant heart.

Then my brother brought me here,
either because the dispute
was not as simple as it seemed,
or – more likely –

because he did not want to leave.

For here in Toledo there lives
a lady of such consummate perfection
that they say no pen is mighty enough

to sing her praises.
 Well, he fell in love with her,
 though his love is, alas, unrequited.
 And now he wanders the city
 like a lost soul,
 hoping to win her heart.
 He arranged for me to come here,
 so that I should not be alone in Madrid,
 or perhaps so that I could distract him
 from this cruel love.
 Immediately I told Don Juan,
 he followed me here, love stricken.
 At which I should be flattered,
 if only, alas! I were not
 repentant of the whole affair.
 For love, base villain,
 flourishes in neglect
 and balks at courtesy and compliments.
 But, getting back to my brother.
 With stubborn obstinacy
 he sought to discover
 why his love had been rejected.
 Finding that she loves another,
 though I know not whom,
 and smarting more from his rival's triumph
 than from his lady's disdain
 – (seeing your rival in love
 hurts so much more
 than losing love itself) –
 my brother bribed
 (Oh, vile custom!)
 a maid in the lady's confidence
 to discover who she loved,
 and what her intentions were,
 and that is how he learned
 that the lady had resolved
 to flee with her lover tonight.
 So. My brother, furious,

– for jealousy is oblivious
to all fear and risk –
contracted two men who,
disguised as Justice
(such astute malice!),
are to arrest the man
who has taken her.
And as they pass this house
they are to leave her with me,
cloistered in this safe haven,
and then, as they part,
so as not to leave a trace,
are to give the lover
a chance to escape.

The idea being
that he'll take to his heels,
believing he's fleeing arrest.
And my brother, with this plan
his love has concocted,
will, at little risk to himself,
bring his beloved to this very house,
where he can play the ardent suitor
saving her from her plight.
And as for the Lady, how can she complain?
Though if she were to learn
the depths of his deception
she would surely despise him.
And that, Celia, is why I must wait.
How could I sleep with all this on my mind?

CELIA: My Lady, none of this surprises me.

Isn't it well known
that when someone's in love
they colour the truth
with all sorts of deceptions?
And who could be shocked
by the temerity of women,
the resolution of lovers,
the treachery of maid servants?

It happens all over, and I'll warrant
there's a few black pots in this house.
I'm more surprised by your actions
and your heart's inclination
to forsake your suitor, Don Juan.
Why swap affection for indifference,
when you have no cause to,
and Don Juan has given you none?

DOÑA ANA: That he has given me none is true,
that I have none is not.

CELIA: What do you mean?

DOÑA ANA: Why are you surprised?

Desire is blind.

You know the story, Celia.

Don Juan pursued me,

courteous and loving,

and what he lacked as a suitor

he made up for in noble blood.

Whatever I wanted was mine for the asking.

Yet, that was his downfall:

for, if he is already mine,

what is left for me to desire?

But that is not the only cause of my indifference.

You see, another flame burns in my breast.

I often see from my window

a vision of manly beauty

that can only be Apollo himself.

And this man, oh, Celia -

I know not if this is love or pure fancy -

is... But now I have confessed

without knowing what I'm saying.

CELIA: Are you crying?

DOÑA ANA: Should I not weep,
when I am utterly wretched,
knowing that I err
but unable to stop myself?

CELIA: (*Aside.*

This is great news –
I've got Don Juan himself
hidden in her room.
For having noticed with dismay
how she rejects him,
he has vowed to force
an explanation from her,
come what may.)

And who has won your love, my Lady?

DOÑA ANA: His name is Don Carlos de Olmedo.

But that's a knock at the door.

See who it is, Celia. I'll explain later.

CELIA: Who is it?

CLOAKED MAN: Justice!

DOÑA ANA: It's the Lady!

Open up, Celia.

CELIA: Enter, whoever you are.

Scene Two

CLOAKED MEN and LEONOR enter.

CLOAKED MAN: My Lady, I enter this noble house
with all due respect,
and no wish to offend,
but I must ask you to
keep this lady safe
while we pursue her companion,
who has killed another man.
Now I must beg your leave and return to my duties.

DOÑA ANA: What is this? Celia call those men back,
and tell them to take this lady away.
I will not allow such shameless behaviour in my house.

CELIA: (*Aside.*

My mistress hides well her aim
to make this home the lady's cell.)

DOÑA LEONOR: My Lady (my heart is in my mouth),
if my tears arouse pity in your heart
(I can barely speak)
I beg you on bended knee
to show pity, if not for my life,
then for my good name.
Now that I am in your house,
do not allow them to take me
where my reputation
will suffer greater violence.
Surely, if I were the wanton woman
you take me for I would not ask this of you?

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside to CELIA.*

Her beauty and suffering have moved me.
My brother is right, Celia.)

CELIA: (*Aside to DOÑA ANA.*

Her beauty defies belief.
If she's like this in a state
what's she like at her best?)

DOÑA ANA: Arise, my Lady, and pardon me if,
alarmed by these sudden events,
I was inattentive and rude.
I do not recognise you
and may have been aloof,
but your noble bearing
speaks in your favour,
and I offer to serve you
with all my heart.

DOÑA LEONOR: Let me kiss your feet, divine Goddess,
whose temple, whose shrine, whose altar
are a sanctuary for my ruined fortunes.

DOÑA ANA: Rise, and tell me what has led to such unhappiness.
Though for the beautiful,
misfortune must be so much easier to bear.

CELIA: (*Aside.*

This doesn't look good.
She's riddled with jealousy.)

DOÑA LEONOR: My Lady, although shame
should silence my story,
a woman who, like me,
finds herself in such a sorry way
has no reason to hide anything.
Rather, I believe it pays
to do as you command,
since the signs point to my guilt.
Yet the cause of my actions is decent.
So hear what I have to say.

DOÑA ANA: Let silence be your answer.

CELIA: Fantastic! A story at midnight,
and by candlelight! What a treat!

DOÑA LEONOR: If you wish to hear
the sad truth of these events,
which recount my grievous misfortunes,
listen, and the telling of my troubles
will become your entertainment,
while the telling of my cares
may relieve my sorrowful heart.
I was born noble,
which was the first impediment:
it is no small misfortune
for a poor person
to be born of high rank;
for although nobility
is a precious jewel,
it is but a trinket,
a mere embarrassment,
in an unfortunate soul:
plebeian preoccupations
and noble considerations
repel one another
when they exist in one being.

I suppose I am allowed to say
 that I was born beautiful,
 for your eyes bear witness
 to what my efforts have enhanced.
 I shall only say... oh, how I wish
 that another could tell this story,
 for in speech or silence

I find two obstacles:
 if I say that I was celebrated
 as a miracle of modesty,
 the idiocy of saying it belies me.
 Yet, if I do not say it,
 I do not tell my story;
 so I betray myself if I speak,
 and keep you in ignorance
 if I remain silent.

From a very young age
 I was inclined to studying
 with such burning fervour,
 with such extreme diligence
 that long and difficult tasks
 were conquered with consummate ease.

In time my learning
 attracted such intense admiration
 that what was hard-earned knowledge
 came to be revered as genius.

My celebrity spread far and wide,
 and my looks and grace
 lent weight to every word I spoke.

And so, the public came to worship and adore me,
 a deity they themselves had created.

Through gossip my fame travelled abroad,
 and safe distance from the truth
 gave credence to the false reports.

Passion wore spectacles
 of such great strength
 that my modest talents
 were falsely magnified.

The hearts of men,
devoutly prostrated at my altar,
became so entrapped
that what had at first
been a voluntary cult
came to be regarded
as a duty of courtly homage.
He who dissented,
wisely taking issue with the rest,
dared not utter a word,
fearing that his judgement
be considered vulgar,
or censured as vain.
Midst such acclaim,
reeling from the attention,
and unable to find
a sure target for my love,
I could love no-one,
though I was loved by all.
I stood firm against the dangers,
bravely defending my honour,
and modestly believing common flattery
to be beyond suspicion.
My parents,
falsely assured of my good sense,
neglected me;
how mistaken they were,
for it was like unlocking a Pandora's box
of conflicting impulses and desires.
And in this foolish neglect,
was I not bound
to be at risk of some encounter
in which I would lose my senses?
And so it happened
that, among the many who,
encouraged by my fame,
sought to win my approval,
there arrived by chance...

(Good heavens, tyrants,
how can you allow
such perfect love
to be forged from chance?)
...Don Carlos de Olmedo,
a young foreigner,
but of such pure origin
that it was impossible
to ignore his breeding,
even if ignorant of his noble name.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

My God! What's this?

Leonor loves the man I adore...

How promptly has love given Don Juan his revenge!

And how tragically.)

DOÑA LEONOR: I beg your licence, my Lady,

to paint his portrait for you

so as to excuse my errors,

or perhaps to alleviate my pain,

or perhaps because, as you learn

of the reckless extremes of my love

you will not be surprised that such a man

deserved so much from me.

His face was an enigma

composed of two opposites,

boldness and beauty,

in such happy unity

that his beauty showed

no trace of feminine softness,

and I found perfection

in that very absence:

a manly boldness

that little flattered his features

did not allow his beauty easy dominion.

He was so oblivious to his own beauty,

that he did not even deign

to favour it with disdain.

He was graced with an intelligence
so subtle, so heightened,
that his wisdom belied his years.
The soul of these perfections
had such a charming nature,
such bright ease,
such fine taste,
such amiable reserve
and was so attractive and pleasant
that the finest tact
ennobled any carelessness.
He was so humble in his affection,
so tender in his attentions,
so refined in his convictions
so pleasing in his conduct,
so perfect in every way;
long-suffering in disdain,
silent in favours,
resolute in danger,
and prudent in adventure:
tell me, with these qualities,
and many more that I have not named,
how could any woman
safeguard her modesty?
My Lady, I loved him.
I will not try your patience
by recounting every detail
of my reckless determination,
for you cannot be ignorant
of the trials of love,
whose first steps
are anxiety and caution,
whose methods
are risks and daring,
and whose end
is tragedy and suffering.
We loved each other
and wished our union

to find a chaste marriage bed,
where Hymen would bless
our everlasting bond.
And so that my father,
who was looking among my suitors
for the best match for me,
should not be an obstacle,
we determined to run away tonight.
And that is how,
trampling my father's love,
and my modesty and honour,
I made to the street.
Hardly had I taken my first steps,
when two cloaked men approached us.
'Who goes there?' they said,
and, with my heart in my mouth,
not thinking what I was doing
(for trying to keep silent always forces secrets out),
I shouted, 'Carlos, we are lost!'
and barely had my shouts been uttered
when the two men drew their swords,
and one of them cried,
'Kill him, Don Diego, kill him,
for that tyrant with him
is Doña Leonor de Castro, my cousin!'
My lover drew his sword,
and bravely, barely with its tip,
stabbed his adversary,
who fell, crying, 'I am done for!'
At that, his companion shouted out,
and in the fray people came running,
and though Don Carlos could have fled,
he stayed, fearlessly, to save me.
Again he tried to defend himself,
but, persuaded by my weeping
rather than his adversaries' force,
he sheathed his sword.
With that they arrested him,

and my cousin, Don Diego,
 was taken for dead.
 As a consequence of that disaster,
 my person and my woes
 were deposited in your noble house,
 My Lady, where I now find myself,
 bereft of reputation,
 honour or consolation;
 breathless, helpless,
 and awaiting my death sentence
 in the sentencing of Don Carlos.

DOÑA ANA: My Lady, I feel your pain as if it were my own.
 Celia, take this lady to my room while I await my brother.

CELIA: Follow me, my Lady.

DOÑA LEONOR: I follow your footsteps,
 just as I am forced
 to follow my destiny.

CELIA and DOÑA LEONOR exit.

DOÑA ANA: If Carlos's gallant splendour
 could by itself move me to care,
 does not envy enhance beyond measure
 all that naturally made him so fair?
 If I thought to win him without fighting,
 now that I know he's in love,
 won't victory be much more exciting
 when he's parted from his sweet precious dove?
 So, forgive me Don Juan, though it may be more sane
 to repay your love, which I now condemn to oblivion,
 how can I do so, when into my fierce pain
 jealousy has injected its poison?
 Carlos is more gallant, but if that were not so,
 that he belongs to another makes him irresistible!

Scene Three

DON CARLOS enters, sword drawn, with CASTAÑO.

DON CARLOS: My lady, if there is charity in your soul,
take pity on my misfortunes,
and triumph over all
by becoming my safe haven.
Fast on my heels comes Justice,
and though flight is base cowardice,
I throw myself at your feet.
Let me catch my breath
in your blessed sanctuary.
Though if I've lost my soul
what matters life to me.

CASTAÑO: Well, it matters to me.
So, my Lady, I ask you,
with knocking knees,
to hide me under your skirts.

DON CARLOS: Silence, you fool!

CASTAÑO: Well, I wouldn't be the first man
to disappear up a lady's dress.

DOÑA ANA: *(Aside.*
My God, it's Carlos!
Chance dances to the rhythm of my desire.
I can compel his love
without humiliating myself.
By sheltering him here,
showered with generous attentions,
I shall cloak my love
in the guise of compassion.
I'll be a model of decorum,
and force him to surrender to me
without surrendering myself.
It's true, I know that he loves Leonor,
but do men really possess
such a superior will

that when they see
 another opportunity beckon
 they forgo it for the one they love?
 But halt, Love! Why hesitate
 when I am living proof
 that love can change its course?)
 Sir, misfortunes
 are often the daughter of courage
 and fuel for pity,
 and, if I can offer you relief,
 catch your lost breath,
 and hurry into this room,
 which gives onto a garden,
 before my brother arrives.
 If he were to see you
 here alone with me
 you would be in even greater peril.

DON CARLOS: I would not wish, My Lady,
 that saving my life
 should cause you alarm.

CASTAÑO: You worry about that now? Saints above!

DOÑA ANA: Nothing can discourage me.
 Follow me. There is a room
 my brother never enters,
 it's where we keep
 the furniture I use for important visits
 – carpets, chairs, that sort of thing.
 It also has an exit to the garden,
 just in case anything happens.
 Come, I will show you it myself,
 so that you need not worry.
 But first let me take the precaution
 of locking this door
 so that I am warned
 when my brother calls me.

CASTAÑO: (*Aside to DON CARLOS.*
 Sir, what a wonderful house,

and what a splendid lady!
Why couldn't you
[though this is a mere gut feeling,
which is hardly surprising,
since my gut's empty
and looks like remaining that way],
have fallen in love with this one,
and not with poor old Leonor,
who's got nothing to offer
but a few measly degrees?)

DON CARLOS: God, but you're despicable!

DOÑA ANA: This way, please.

(Aside.

Love, you wave happiness before my eyes,
be fair and grant me my heart's desire.)

Scene Four

In LEONOR's house.

DON RODRIGO and HERNANDO enter.

DON RODRIGO: What news, Hernando?

HERNANDO: How shall I put it, Sir?

Your daughter has fled the house.

DON RODRIGO: What? How? With whom?

HERNANDO: How could I possibly answer that,
when men came from all over
to worship at her feet?
It was impossible to know
what was love, and what was courtesy.
And who's to say
that you are not to blame
for not seeing that
being the object of such desire
might create opportunities.
It is hardly surprising

that some amorous and indiscreet suitor
should please her.

DON RODRIGO: Hernando, do not try my patience,
this is no time to be offering advice!
Ah, the beast! Who could have known
that behind her displays
of honour and modesty
such great wantonness
was locked in her insolent breast?
Women! Poisonous monsters!
How can you ever be trusted
if, with the same reckless madness,
the ignorant and the learned
meet their downfall?
I thought, vile daughter,
that your beauty and genius
would overcome my poverty
and be your greatest dowry,
but now look what you've done!
You're damaged goods!
Being famed and fêted as a new miracle
is no good to me now. It only means
that your disgrace is known to all.
But, how do I balance revenge and valour
against this affront to my honour?
And how do I fight as I weep,
knowing the offence, but not the offender?
And thus offended, how am I to know
how I should be avenged and against whom?

HERNANDO: My Lord, I have no sure evidence
who has caused Leonor's absence,
but rumour has it that amongst
all who paid her court,
Don Pedro de Arellano was the most fervent,
so the finger points in his direction.

DON RODRIGO: But if it was Don Pedro,
what difficulty could he see

in asking for her hand,
without offending me like this?

HERNANDO: My Lord, so many men loved Leonor,
and have come to you
to ask for her hand in marriage,
he would fear not being favoured.
For all men in love are fearful,
and poorly judge their own luck.
Although in using such a method
I respect his fear, but not its cure:
he sought safety in absence
by removing himself from the danger.
My Lord, if I may offer my advice:
you are old and weary,
Don Pedro is young, rich and proud,
and, above all, the damage is already done:
be level with him, and offer him
precisely what he has taken for himself.
Tell him that he must return
your beautiful Leonor to her home,
and marry her immediately.
He will agree to that,
since no one would flee
from what is best for his honour.
And if you do as I say,
you will make of the poison
its own antidote.

DON RODRIGO: A faithful friend and loyal servant
is a great treasure, Hernando.
I shall find my aggressor at once,
and turn him from enemy to son.

HERNANDO: Indeed, Sir, the remedy is best applied
before your disgrace is known to all.

Both exit.

Scene Five

In DON PEDRO's house.

DONÑA LEONOR appears, backing away from DON JUAN.

DON JUAN: Stop, beautiful murderess.

Whom are you fleeing?

Have you been offended?

How would you treat

someone who hated you,

if this is how you treat

a man who adores you?

Your flight demeans your triumph over me,

for if you have conquered me

and now turn your back on me,

you create this paradox:

you flee from he who loves you,

and I pursue one who is killing me.

DONÑA LEONOR: For heaven's sake,

as you're a gentleman,

leave me. I have hardly set

my unhappy foot in this house,

whose owner I do not even know,

so what can I make of your words,

if the only thing that I understand

is the amazement they cause me?

And if, as I suspect,

you think I am another,

your passion deceives you.

Stop. Use your wits.

I am not your lady.

DON JUAN: Ah, wretched woman!

This is the last straw!

You pretend to be another

so as not to hear my anxieties;

as if my love were so unworthy

that merely hearing my pleas
would damage your dignity.

But be assured
by the past experience
of our love.

Have you not so often seen
that, when the waves of my passion
were at their wildest,
and love's desire
was ready to break on the beach,
respect for you
was the shore for my hopes?

DOÑA LEONOR: I have already said that it is not I, Sir.

Is that not enough for you?

Be gone, or I shall call
on someone who
will hear my anguished cries,
and accept them for real,
or punish them for false.

DON JUAN: Listen.

DOÑA LEONOR: I have no reason to.

DON JUAN: By God, you tyrant,
if you will not listen to me
of your own accord,
I will force you to.
You will learn of my rudeness,
since you weary of my courtesy.

He takes her by the arm.

DOÑA LEONOR: What is this!

Good God! Help me!

DON JUAN: You cry to God in vain,
for those who show no pity
will find none in return.

DOÑA LEONOR: Help! Take pity on my innocence!
Help! Someone!

Scene Six

DON CARLOS enters, with DOÑA ANA trying to stop him.

DOÑA ANA: Stop! Wait!

I'll see what it was
without you stepping
into danger's way
if my brother has returned.

DON CARLOS: Pardon, my Lady, but that voice has pierced my
soul.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

The door is locked,
so it cannot be my brother,
of that I am sure.
I'm more worried that Don Carlos
should discover his lady.
But if she is in my chambers,
and Celia is with her,
what could this noise be?
And with everything in darkness.)
Who is it?

DON CARLOS: It is I, my Lady. Why do you ask?

DON JUAN: Doña Ana, my love,
why do you treat me so harshly?
What then were the promises,
those tokens of love,
you gave me in Madrid
to fire my hopes and desires?
I served you only,
obedient to your rule,
a salamander in your rays,
a sunflower in your brightness,
Clytie in your clear light.
For you I abandoned everything:
the comfort of my home,
the respect of my father,

my beloved native land.
And you – if not through love,
then through your attentive courtesy
and tacit pleasure –
let it be known that my hope
was a fit offering at your sacred altar.
Why dismiss me now,
and treat me with such disdain?

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

My God! What is this I hear?
Is it not Don Juan de Vargas,
condemning my ingratitude
and exalting his acts of love?
But who let him in?)

DON CARLOS: My Lady, listen.

DON CARLOS approaches LEONOR.

DOÑA LEONOR: Get away from me. I've told you to leave me.

DON CARLOS: Listen, beautiful Ana, it is I, Don Carlos,
to whom you have given refuge.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

Did I hear him say Don Carlos?
Good heavens! I swear
it even sounds like Carlos!
Perhaps he is so much part of my soul
that everyone appears to be Don Carlos,
when he, my precious, must now be in prison.)

DON CARLOS: My Lady?

DOÑA LEONOR: Go away! Can you not be told to be gone?

DON CARLOS: Dear Lady, perhaps you are angry
that I left the garden room.
Forgive me, but I only wanted
to keep you out of danger's way.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

Good God. He sounds just like Carlos.)

DON JUAN: So, wretched woman, you insist in your cruel disdain?

Scene Seven

CELIA enters, with a light.

CELIA: (*Aside.*

Let's see if my mistress is here,
so that I can let Don Juan
out of his hiding place in her chambers.
But what's this I see?)

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

What's this? Good heavens! Isn't that Don Carlos?)

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

Don Juan here? I feel faint.)

DON JUAN: (*Aside.*

Don Carlos de Olmedo here?
He must be Doña Ana's lover,
and because of him
that treacherous, inconstant shrew
has scorned me.)

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

Don Carlos in this house? My God!
When I've been weeping
bitter tears for him in prison?
Hidden in these rooms,
whispering endearments
to me, thinking I was another?
He must be this woman's lover.
But how? Am I dreaming?
Didn't they take him prisoner
when they brought me here?
This is agony!)

DON JUAN: Loose woman! Slattern!

Is this why you disdained me?
Because you had another man
hidden in your house? Good grief!
Is this the reason for your scorn?

Well, heaven help me, traitor:
if I cannot avenge my rage on you
because some tyrannical law
demands respect for women
and saves you from my fury,
I shall avenge myself on your lover!

DOÑA ANA: Stop, Don Juan! Wait!

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

So many contradictory feelings
battle in my breast
in this awful confusion
that speech is halted,
and in trying to say it all
I say nothing.
Leonor here? But how?)

DOÑA ANA: Stop!

DON JUAN: Step aside, tyrant!
Your lover must die!

CELIA: My Lady, my master is at the door.

DOÑA ANA: What? Celia! Help!

Gentlemen, if my good name moves you,
you must for the moment
believe that I am not guilty
of inviting anyone into this house.
Hide, and I give you my word
that in the morning
I will clear all your doubts.
But if my brother finds you here,
my life and my honour are in danger.

DON CARLOS: You can be assured of my obedience,
since my life is in your hands.

DON JUAN: And you can be assured of mine,
wretched woman, much against my wishes,
for you have offended me.
But you have command over me,

and I have no desire for you to be
more indebted to Mr Obedient than to me.

DOÑA ANA: I appreciate your consideration.
Celia, hide them in different rooms,
and make sure they cannot leave 'til the morning.

CELIA: Got it. God, I could do with a break.
Don Juan, come with me.
And you, my Lady,
put that ghost where you wish.

CELIA and DON JUAN exit.

DOÑA ANA: Sir, hide in this room.

DON CARLOS: I obey, but God help me in such confusion.

DOÑA ANA: Leonor, you must also retire.

DOÑA LEONOR: My Lady, even if you did not command it,
my shame would force me to hide.

LEONOR exits.

DOÑA ANA: Has there ever been such confusion?
I hardly know who I am!

CELIA enters.

CELIA: He's in my quarters. What shall I do now?

DOÑA ANA: Open up to my brother, who is waiting below.
That's the most important thing.

CELIA: (*Aside.*
She's so frightened
that she's forgotten to ask
how Don Juan got into the house.
Once the trouble is over
there'll be all hell to pay,
but one of the servants can be blamed.
They're all as bad as each other,
blaming each other one minute,
saving each other the next.)

CELIA exits.

DOÑA ANA: Good heavens! What a mess!

Here I am,
in love with Carlos,
pursued by Don Juan,
my rival's a house guest,
and my brother's at the door.
But here he comes.
Deep breath, everything's under control.

Scene Eight

DON PEDRO enters.

DON PEDRO: My Lady, my dear sister,
awake with the sun,
dressed with the dawn:
a fine example of our love
and mutual affection.
Where have you hidden Leonor?

DOÑA ANA: She has retired to my chambers,
where I sent her until you arrived.
But, why are you so late?

DON PEDRO: Because, as she left the house,
Leonor was seen by a relative of hers,
and Carlos almost killed him.
When I saw the street full of people,
I made a decoy
to stop them finding out who she was
and who was taking her.
As if moved by pity,
I ordered two servants
to take the wounded man to his house,
while others captured Carlos,
and Leonor was delivered into your care.
I did not wish to return until the street was quiet.

DOÑA ANA: That was very wise of you.

A thousand risks were averted by your delay.

DON PEDRO: You are all discretion;

and since Leonor is safe here,

it is best not to disturb her

to listen to my woes.

Don't you agree?

Now that she's in this house

I have time to spare.

For, he who puts his own troubles

before the good of his mistress

is a poor lover, no?

And you too must rest,

for my weariness

is as nothing compared to yours.

DOÑA ANA: Brother, to serve you

I would run much greater risks,

for we two are like one,

and my soul treats

your sufferings as its own.

I imagine, as I contemplate them,

that your suffering and mine

are born of the same cause.

DON PEDRO: Such fine thoughts in such a fine soul.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

If you only knew...)

DON PEDRO: Love, if you reward perseverance,
lift my hopes on high.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

Love, if your name is care,
take care of me tonight.)

BOTH exit.

End of the First Day

DAY TWO

Scene One

DON CARLOS and CASTAÑO enter.

DON CARLOS: Castaño, I am beside myself.

CASTAÑO: You know what? I've not been feeling myself either.
Except, of course, when I was in bed.

DON CARLOS: Do you know what happened...
though my better judgement
tells me it was a dream.

CASTAÑO: Tell me all about it.
I slept the sleep of the just,
and dreamt like a lady,
as well I might,
with Leonor's dresses for my mattress.

DON CARLOS: Leonor gave you her dresses?

CASTAÑO: Yes, sir, when she was bundled away
I was left holding her bundles.

DON CARLOS: Where are they?

CASTAÑO: Right there.
I've a good mind to
shred them into my bed.
Fair's fair after all.
I've been looking after them,
now they can look after me.

DON CARLOS: Castaño, I may be losing my mind,
but I swear I've seen Leonor
in this very house.

CASTAÑO: Well, you know what they say, sir,
'He who has lost his oxen...'

Well, it's just the same when you're in love:
 you're weak at the knees with desire,
 you've lost your Leonor,
 so you see Leonors all around.
 But more to the point, Sir,
 what about that lovely lady,
 may God bless her?
 Seeing as you and she were about to 'chat',
 I tried to sleep –
 so's not to play the gooseberry.

DON CARLOS: Castaño, that is sheer malice.

That lady offered me refuge,
 though her beauty did make
 her kindness all the more welcome.
 So boldly did she make
 one promise after another,
 and so discreetly and agreeably
 did she praise and flatter me,
 that I might, if I were vain,
 believe she had other feelings for me.
 But these are the fancies
 of young and arrogant men,
 who seduce women
 and then judge them slatterns;
 who, in their misguided malice,
 only judge women honourable
 when they are aloof. And,
 according to this way of thinking,
 women never behave so well
 as when they are treated ill.
 While the Lady and I were talking,
 we heard what sounded like
 the screams of a woman
 in another chamber.
 Although Doña Ana tried to stop me,
 I got the better of her,
 for I felt I had to go.
 A servant shed light on the noise,

and in the glow I recognised
my beautiful Leonor.

CASTAÑO: Who?

DON CARLOS: My Leonor.

CASTAÑO: Rubbish! You were dreaming!

I knew it! I knew you were mad!
But not certifiable!

Just hearing you gives me the creeps.

Ease up, Señor.

Look, it's all very well to be mad,
but not completely round the bend.

Madness is okay, Sir, you know,

once a month, perhaps,

in the fullness of the moon,

now you see it, now you don't –

anything that helps the brave –

but not, Sir, so as to get the neighbours

whispering that you're a stark staring lunatic.

DON CARLOS: Scoundrel! Wait 'til we get out of here...

CASTAÑO: A moment, Sir, for I too have seen Leonor.

DON CARLOS: Where?

CASTAÑO: In there, in your pouch,

painted in such glorious detail

that I took her for the real thing,

'cos when I looked at her,

the colour rose in her cheeks.

I know I'm a bit thick,

so I wasn't absolutely sure,

but I did think, since she didn't say a word,

that it was because she was all made-up.

DON CARLOS: Made-up? Nonsense!

CASTAÑO: Why so angry?

She looked real enough to me.

I've seen it before, you know,

women made-up and real
at the same time.

DON CARLOS: If Leonor's beauty rivals the sun
why would she wear make-up?

CASTAÑO: And if she is the sun,
she'll shine anyway, won't she?
But, if you're so sure you saw her
what are you going to do?

DON CARLOS: I'll wait and see what's brought her here.
For if a charitable star guided her,
how can I go and leave her?
Better to wait 'til it's all clear,
and then I can take her away.

CASTAÑO: Good plan, Sir... But it looks
as if a servant of this house
is heading straight this way.

DON CARLOS: What could she want?

Scene Two

CELIA enters.

CELIA: Sir, my mistress says
you are to retire to the garden,
since my master
must enter these chambers now
and you must not be found here.
(*Aside.*

It's really so that he doesn't see Leonor from here.)

DON CARLOS: Tell your mistress that her wish is my command.

He exits.

CELIA: Very well, Sir.

CASTAÑO: Hey! You! There's something I want you to hear.

CELIA: And what could that be?

CASTAÑO: My confession.

CELIA: Careful, you clown.

CASTAÑO: Can telling you my sins not be called confession?

CELIA: Don't you go trying to get intimate with me,
it's mixed up enough round here as it is.

CASTAÑO: Well, you've got us shut away in here,
so why shouldn't I make the most of it?

CELIA: I've already said: I'm not interested.

CASTAÑO: Why so cruel? Here I am locked up and in love,
shouldn't I be allowed some fun?
Anyway, what makes you so uppity?

CELIA: Who are you calling uppity, waster?

CASTAÑO: Ssh. Calm. Here's a little something for you
so that you don't forsake me.

CELIA: I have to go,
But if this is not a game I'll be back.

CASTAÑO: Ah, but it is a game,
and like all games,
it can take many turns.

Scene Three

DOÑA LEONOR and DOÑA ANA enter.

DOÑA ANA: How was your night, Leonor?

DOÑA LEONOR: If only I could tell you not to ask.

DOÑA ANA: Why?

(Aside.

How agonising
to be obliged to be pleasant
to this infuriating woman.)

DOÑA LEONOR: Because if you ask me
I have to answer
that I slept well or badly,

and in both cases
there is a problem,
for my suffering
and your honour
are not well met.
If I say badly
it would be impolite,
and if I say well
I'd seem happy in my plight.

DOÑA ANA: Your genius and your face
believe one another.
Yet, isn't beauty a curse
in a woman of genius?

DOÑA LEONOR: Since you are so sure, Doña Ana,
that your beauty
outshines the rest,
it is all too easy
for you to be generous
in your praise for others,
for she who cannot compete
cannot be an obstacle.

DOÑA ANA: So, Leonor, how are things with you?

DOÑA LEONOR: I am like a ship wrecked in a storm
on tempestuous seas,
with its bow buckled in the depths
and its stern tossed in the air.
(*Aside.*

How can I ask her
- my heart trembles at the thought -
why Carlos was here last night?
Yet what have I to fear,
if I am already drowning
in the poison of jealousy?)

DOÑA ANA: But, Leonor, why do you hesitate?

DOÑA LEONOR: I beg your pardon, my Lady.
Yet, since I have told you of my love

why should I try to hide my anxiety?
My lady, I must ask you,
since you know that I love Carlos,
and that I am to be his wife:
how came Don Carlos
to be here last night?

DOÑA ANA: Allow me not to answer that question immediately.

DOÑA LEONOR: Why?

DOÑA ANA: Because now I want you to enjoy some music.

DOÑA LEONOR: My anguish will be better entertained
if I know the answer to my question...

DOÑA ANA: If I say that this is all mere coincidence,
that must be answer enough.
But my brother is coming this way.

DOÑA LEONOR: Then I must hide.

DOÑA ANA: Not now. I have told him about you,
thinking that he may be able
to relieve your anguish.
Men are so much better at these things,
wouldn't you agree?

DOÑA LEONOR: You may be right,
but something troubles me.

Scene Four

DON PEDRO enters.

DOÑA LEONOR: Good heavens! What's this?
Is this your brother, my Lady?

DON PEDRO: It is I, beautiful Leonor.
Why are you so alarmed?

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*
My Lord! I've turned to marble.
Oh, Fortune, is this how

you trifle with my suffering?
By bringing me to the house of Don Pedro?)

DON PEDRO: Beautiful Leonor,
You will be safe in my house.
Here I will protect your honour
from the perils that threaten it,
be it at the cost of a thousand lives,
nay! a thousand souls!

DOÑA LEONOR: I appreciate your generous attention, Don Pedro.

DON PEDRO: My Lady, since the waves
of your violent fortune
have washed you up on these shores,
let it not be said
that you could not find
safe sanctuary here.
I, my Lady, have been yours,
and though you have treated me
with the greatest disdain,
my love is all the finer,
and no matter how you reject me
grace will be your answer.
You are in my home now,
and our only wish
is to please you and serve you,
as mistress of the house.
Entertain Leonor, sister.

DOÑA ANA: Celia.

CELIA: Yes, my Lady?

DOÑA ANA: Tell Clori and Laura to sing.

(Aside.

Now, Celia, it is time
to reap the rewards
of all my hard work.
Bring Don Carlos to the grille,
so that he can see us,
but cannot hear what we say.

In that way I shall force
jealous passion into his breast.
For although jealousy brags
that it adds spice to love,
being jealous of your mistress is one thing,
being jealous of your wife is another.)
Won't you tell them to sing?

CELIA: I shall. And all will be made clear.

DONNA ANA and CELIA exit.

DON PEDRO: Beautiful Leonor, give me licence
to break my vow of silence
with my amorous pleas,
for he who fails to speak his pain aloud
cannot truly feel the bonds of love.
What flaw do you find in my love
that you treat me with such contempt?
Was my dignified adoration offensive?
And if loving you was an offence,
how can another enjoy the pleasure?
If he and I share equal blame,
why not equal pain?
How, if disdain is the law
enforced by your beauty,
is the law upheld for me
and repealed for another?
How was his passion more noble,
and his suffering more gallant,
that what you condemned in me
you praised in another?
If he appeared more worthy,
did my unbounding love not make up
for what I lacked in the art of courtship?
Doubtless it was my gentlemanly reticence
that stood in the way of the prize,
for he who merits it least
always wins happiness.
But since I am bound to love you

for all eternity,
 it does not matter
 if you deny me the prize now,
 for one day you will step down
 from your pious pedestal
 and concede to my constant love.

DOÑA LEONOR: Allow me, Don Pedro,
 since you do me so many honours,
 to beg you, gentleman as you are,
 to do me the greatest honour of all:
 do not deepen my suffering,
 for Fortune has me on my knees,
 and the scourge of my shame and anguish
 lashes me as fiercely as any whip.
 Can you not see that,
 in the present state of my affairs,
 talking to me of your love
 is such great impropriety
 that it is neither good
 for you to speak thus,
 nor for me to hear it?
 And so, I ask you, please be silent.
 If your love seeks to avenge itself
 of my disdain,
 choose another form,
 since I have suffered
 more than enough pain
 for you to be avenged.

*They speak apart, and DON CARLOS, CELIA and CASTAÑO
 come to the grille.*

Scene Five

*CELIA, CASTAÑO, DON CARLOS, DOÑA ANA, MUSICIANS,
DON PEDRO, DOÑA LEONOR.*

CELIA: My Lady asked you to retire
but I've brought you here to this grille
so that you can hear some music
being sung for a certain Lady my master adores.
This is a special present from me to you.
But you mustn't move from this spot.

CASTAÑO: Psst! Hey, you!
Are we to have the pleasure of your company?

CELIA: I cannot stay.

She exits across the stage.

CASTAÑO: She's gone and locked the door,
and left us here
like nuns behind bars.
All we need now
is for the Mother Superior to appear,
and listen in to what we're saying.

He steps forward and looks.

But, good Lord, Sir,
your madness must be catching,
for I fear I've caught it.

DON CARLOS: How?

CASTAÑO: I'm like the man who's lost his oxen –
I can hear their bells,
and smell their smells.

DON CARLOS approaches.

DON CARLOS: What's this? Love preserve me!
Leonor, Doña Ana and Don Pedro!
You see how I was not deluded
when I said she was here?

CASTAÑO: Aren't you angry that she is?

DON CARLOS: No, not until I know how she got here,
If I'm in the very same house,
and am blameless,
how can I blame Leonor?
My first guess is that merciful fortune
has cast us up on the same shores.

CASTAÑO: I say, you're taking this very calmly.
This isn't like you at all.
But if Don Pedro were to take the bull by the horns,
so to speak, and to grab at her skirts,
would we still be so happy?

DON CARLOS: Shut your mouth, Castaño.
It takes a very low man
to assume without reason
that the woman he loves
has betrayed him.
What then does it matter
if she does betray him,
for has he not
already dishonoured himself
by doubting her love?
But, listen, they're tuning up.

DOÑA ANA: Sing, then.

CELIA: Let's hear the music.

MUSIC: Which is the greatest of all love's sorrows?

VOICE I: Being out of favour with the one you love,
that is the greatest of all love's sorrows,
for it's the worst suffering of all.

CHORUS I: It is not so.

VOICE I: Ah, yes it is.

CHORUS II: So, which is the greatest of all love's sorrows?

VOICE II: Sleepless nights of jealous love,
that is the greatest of all love's sorrows,
for jealousy is suffering without compare.

CHORUS II: It is not so.

VOICE II: Ah, yes it is.

CHORUS I: So, which is the greatest of all love's sorrows?

VOICE III: Impatient longing for an absent love,
that is the greatest of all love's sorrows,
for it feels like living death.

CHORUS I: It is not so.

VOICE III: Ah, yes it is.

CHORUS II: So, which is the greatest of all love's sorrows?

VOICE IV: The trials of being in love,
they are the greatest of all love's sorrows,
for happiness is never complete.

CHORUS II: It is not so.

VOICE IV: Ah, yes it is.

CHORUS I: So, which is the greatest of all love's sorrows?

VOICE V: Not rejoicing when love is returned,
that is the greatest of all love's sorrows,
for one should love when love is equal.

CHORUS I: It is not so.

VOICE V: Ah yes it is.

CHORUS II: You who have just answered,
you alone have known the sorrows of love.

CHORUS I: So, which is the greatest of all love's sorrows?

DON PEDRO: Leonor, the first reason held most weight for me.
Consider that the greatest sorrow love can bring
is lack of favour with the one you love,
for it announces love's fatal end.

DOÑA LEONOR: It is not so.

DON PEDRO: Ah, yes it is.

DOÑA ANA: Brother, I am of another opinion.

It is clear to see
that love's greatest evil is jealousy,

for jealousy brings a mortal pain
far worse than love unanswered.

DOÑA LEONOR: It is not so.

DOÑA ANA: Ah, yes it is.

DOÑA LEONOR: I have imagined that love's greatest sorrow
is losing one who is loved in mutual love.
For, if you have known love
and then come to lose it,
the desire for love's pleasures grows
and with it grows the pain.

DOÑA ANA: It is not so.

DOÑA LEONOR: Ah, yes it is.

DON CARLOS: Ah, Castaño, I would say
that of all love's anxieties,
jealousy is the greatest ill.
If only I could allow myself to be jealous.
But since love's star has decreed that I die,
I shall die merely fearing jealousy,
without suffering its pain,
and that is one sorrow too many.

CASTAÑO: It is not so.

DON CARLOS: Ah, yes it is.

CASTAÑO: Sir, the worst hand
that love can deal
is to want a wench
without the means to woo her:
how can I hope to gain her favour
without something substantial in my pocket?

MUSIC: It is not so.

CASTAÑO: Ah, yes it is.

CELIA: The greatest pain in the trials of love
is to have servants by the dozen,
and yet not one to serve me;
not to mention the calloused hands

of the seamstress who's lost her thimble
and has no way to relieve her aching fingers.

MUSIC: It is not so.

CELIA: Ah, yes it is.

DOÑA ANA: Leonor, if the music does not please you,
let's go to the garden. You are weary,
and perhaps you will find repose there.

DOÑA LEONOR: What repose can there be for a woman
whose only respite is weeping?

DON PEDRO: Come, divine and impossible woman.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside to CELIA.*

Celia, do as I bid you.

If my deceit is a success,

I promise you a dress.)

DON PEDRO, DOÑA ANA and DOÑA LEONOR exit.

Scene Six

CELIA: (*Aside.*

Now that's what's called
an order with style.

Although when a master says
'I promise',

it doesn't mean much,
because they're so tight

that their promises
are followed by excuses,
and we're told

that what they promised
was not a promise,

but simply an order.

But enough behind-the-scenes intrigue.

I'll go and open the door.

I left Don Juan,

who's my biggest headache,

with a key to the garden gate,
 and he was so quick off the mark,
 that he let himself out
 before I could stop him.
 Still, my mistress swallowed my lie
 that it was another servant
 who let him into her chambers;
 and thanks to my double-dealing,
 and the false oaths that I blithely swore,
 she was so convinced
 that now she's entrusted
 the whole plot to me.
 So let's get on with it.)
 Don Carlos?

DON CARLOS: What do you want, Celia? What a mess!

CELIA: I came to see if you heard the music.

DON CARLOS: Yes, and I appreciate your kindness.
 But tell me, Celia, how came that Lady
 with Doña Ana and Don Pedro to be there?

CELIA: (*Aside.*

He's swallowed the bait,
 hook, line and sinker.
 Now to reel him in a bit.)
 That Lady, Sir...
 but I cannot say anything
 unless you promise on your honour
 not to say a word.

DON CARLOS: I promise. Why is she here?

CELIA: I fear, Sir, that it's sinful
 to reveal the lives of others.
 But since you've said
 that you want to know,
 and I've said
 that you mustn't say a word,
 you can claim you know nothing.
 That miracle of beauty, Sir,

is a lady my master adores,
and last night,
I've no idea how,
she entered his chambers.
He's courting and wooing her,
to what end, I don't know,
nor could I, in all conscience,
say that it's wicked:
perhaps he's preparing her
to be a Bride of Christ.
Forgive me that I cannot
tell you what you've asked.
but it's better you hear these things
from lips other than mine.

CELIA exits.

Scene Seven

DON CARLOS: Did you hear that, Castaño?
The offence is clear, and my death is certain.

CASTAÑO: But, Sir, she told you nothing,
so I know nothing. Remember?

DON CARLOS: Heavens above!
What are you saying?
Was that an illusion?
Have I been bewitched?
Who am I?
Where am I?
Am I not the one
who idolised Leonor's beauty,
courted her graciously
served her discreetly,
and won the highest reward
for my devoted love?
Did she not come with me last night,
leaving her home and father,
offering to me alone

the happiness sought by so many?
 And did Justice not take her away?
 So how, for pity's sake,
 can she now be safely ensconced
 in the house of Don Pedro de Arellano,
 who's cooing all over her?
 And I... but why am I not
 burning up in this suffering
 rather than naming my grievances
 one by one? But, by heavens!
 Couldn't Leonor be in this house by chance?
 Perhaps she's not to blame,
 and perhaps she couldn't prevent it?
 And Don Pedro, carried away
 by the sudden good fortune
 of having in his power
 the miracle of perfection, seeks,
 like any hot-blooded man,
 to take advantage of the happy chance
 that has presented itself,
 even though Leonor does not respond
 to his outrageous advances.
 That could well be it.
 But is this any way to guard my lady's honour?
 Allowing her to be fêted by my adversary?
 Am I so low that I merely look on,
 knowing the situation,
 and do nothing to remedy it?
 Good heavens, no!
 Follow me, Castaño.
 Come hell or high water,
 we will take Leonor from this house!

CASTAÑO: Sir, have you taken complete leave of your senses?
 Can't you see that in this house
 there's an army of servants
 that'll beat us to a pulp
 without so much as a by-your-leave.
 They'll have a field day with us!

DON CARLOS: Coward! Is that your answer?
Let thunderbolts rain from the heavens,
let the skies rage in their fury,
let terrors spew forth from the abyss,
but, by God, I'll take her from here!

CASTAÑO: Good Lord, Sir!
If that's the way it is, let's go,
Lead the way, I'm right behind you.
Heroes today, gallows tomorrow!

Scene Eight

DON RODRIGO and DON JUAN enter.

DON RODRIGO: Don Juan, you are Don Pedro's friend:
what good fortune that you help me now.
You are a witness
to the damage he has caused me
by taking Leonor away,
and perhaps you can talk more freely
and calmly to him than I.
I have told you everything,
and in cases as serious as this,
a third party is always
calmer than the aggrieved.
When an honourable man of noble birth
is dishonoured, no matter how he suffers,
the shame of righting the wrong
hinders him from avenging himself,
though the remedy may be clear.

DON JUAN: Don Rodrigo, my Lord,
I give you my word as a gentleman
to bring Don Pedro round to your liking,
for I believe that he is reasonable.
Let us enter without warning
so that he cannot refuse to see us.

(Aside.
 But what's this I see?
 Don Carlos de Olmedo,
 whom I fought last night?
 Ah, wretched Doña Ana.
 Ah, fierce basilisk!)

Scene Nine

CELIA enters.

CELIA: Jesus Christ!
 Don Juan de Vargas and an old man,
 and they've seen you!

DON CARLOS: It matters not. I fear nothing.

DON RODRIGO: Is that Don Carlos?
 It will be embarrassing in the extreme
 if he knows why we are here.

CASTAÑO: Sir, start saying your prayers.
 Those two have come
 to deliver us to the Almighty.
 They're bound to know it was you
 who wounded Don Diego
 and carried Leonor off.

DON CARLOS: It does not matter. I'm resolved to face
 whatever may come my way.

DON RODRIGO: Better to acknowledge him, no? I'll do it.
 Don Carlos: Don Juan and I
 have certain business with Don Pedro,
 which we must settle at once.
 So, I beg you to delay your business
 and make way for us.
 Perhaps you will allow an old man
 this licence to put age
 before youth, gallantry and courtesy.

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

Good heavens!

Don Rodrigo still does not know
that I am the cause of his dishonour.)

DON JUAN: (*Aside.*

Good heavens!

How can I lay eyes on Don Carlos
and still contain my rage?)

CELIA: (*Aside to DON CARLOS.*

Don Carlos, don't you see
the position my mistress will be in
if her brother sees you here?
I beg you to hide.)

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

Good heavens, she's right!

If Doña Ana's brother sees me here
her life will be at risk,
and since she saved me,
that would be the height of infamy.
But what can I do?

There's nothing for it: I'll hide.

Doña Ana's honour comes first.

But then I'll be back

to avenge my honour and my jealousy.)

CELIA: (*Aside to DON CARLOS.*

Sir, for the love of God,

I beg you to hide before Don Pedro arrives.)

DON CARLOS: Don Rodrigo, Sir,

pardon my embarrassment,

for your age is worthy of respect,

but I am here

without Don Pedro's knowledge,

and so I beg you

to allow me to hide

before he arrives,

for I am honour bound

to protect another's reputation.

DON JUAN: (*Aside.*

How can I allow this?
 How much clearer need he declare
 that the savage basilisk
 Doña Ana brings him here?
 This suffering is unbearable,
 and yet, I have not killed him!
 Still, I gave Don Rodrigo my word
 that I would sort out this mess.
 Then I'll be back – after all
 I have the key to the garden –
 to take the revenge I desire.)

DON RODRIGO: Don Carlos. Nothing surprises me.

I am an old man now,
 but I was once young.
 The young must sow their wild oats, no?
 So, since you must hide,
 do as you must,
 for I never ask the cause
 of things that do not concern me.

DON CARLOS: Go with God, Sir.

DON RODRIGO: May heaven protect you.

CELIA: Quickly!

(*Aside.* Jesus. That was a tight one.
 Sir, wait here. I will tell my master.)

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.* I carry Etna in my soul.)

DON JUAN: (*Aside.* I carry Vesuvius in my breast.)

DON CARLOS, CELIA and CASTAÑO exit.

Scene Ten

DON RODRIGO: You see how the world is:

Don Pedro offends me,
 Don Carlos offends him,
 and another surely offends Don Carlos.

All because the Heavens decree
that we will be punished for our faults,
for as we do unto others
so shall we be done to.

DON JUAN: *(Aside.*

I am so beside myself.
Having seen my rival so clearly,
the insult to my honour is manifest.
How can I calm my breast
to be go-between in this business?
Surely he who ignores his own affairs
will poorly represent those of others?

DON CARLOS enters at the grille.

DON CARLOS: From this grille I can hear
without being seen, and learn
why Don Rodrigo is here.

Scene Eleven

DON PEDRO enters.

DON PEDRO: Don Rodrigo, Sir, to what do I owe
the honour you bestow on my house?

DON RODRIGO: The honour will be mine, Don Pedro.
For I come to your house
in search of the honour
that has been taken from me.

DON PEDRO: Don Juan, my friend,
it is not new for you
to honour my house.
Be seated, both of you,
and tell me why you have come.

DON JUAN: I am at your service,
and since our purpose cannot be delayed,
I shall begin.
Don Pedro, as a noble gentleman,

you are not ignorant
of the many obligations
that bear upon you.
This being so, Don Rodrigo
has a grievance against you.

DON PEDRO: Against me, Don Juan?
Please, tell me what it is.
(*Aside.*
Good God, does he know?)

DON RODRIGO: Don Pedro, this is no time to feign surprise.
But if you act out of courtesy and consideration,
then I appreciate your courtesy
and thank you for your consideration.
You, as Leonor's lover,
courted her deceitfully,
though you could have sought my blessing,
and by a means unworthy of you,
you took her from my house,
which... But I do not wish
to quarrel about the offence,
which now has no remedy.
I have sought you with charity,
and not with harsh reproaches,
and as long as the worst of it is repaired,
I can pardon you the offence itself.
You know that no blood in Toledo equals mine.
So what difficulty could there have been
in becoming my son-in-law?
Is the problem that you are rich and I am poor?
That would be a fair answer
if I had sought you out
to offer you Leonor's hand.
But since you chose first,
and you are now forced to marry her,
I cannot take the blame.
I know that she is in your house,
and I cannot suffer her to be here

unless you give her your hand
in matrimony. Immediately.

DON PEDRO: (*Aside.*

Good God!

How can I answer Don Rodrigo,
when it's all such a mess?

If I deny that she's here

it's easy for him to check,

and if I confess the truth –

that Don Carlos took her away –

he'll give her to him, and I'll lose out.

And if I lose Leonor I lose my life.

But if I agree to marry her,

she's likely to reject me.

How shall I deal with this?

Buy time, that's it.)

DON JUAN: Why do you hesitate, my friend,
when this proposition will restore your dignity,
and when Don Rodrigo, calmly and wisely,
offers you the good fortune
of becoming the happy master
of the beautiful Leonor?

DON PEDRO: Let me first declare, Don Rodrigo,
since you know that I courted her,
that so much do I revere Leonor's beauty,
that in my heart I could not look on her,
or speak to her with any intention
other than to see her happy as my wife.
Believe that, and you will believe
that last night Leonor learnt that my sister,
for whom she has great affection,
was ill, and came to my house,
to visit her, believing
that you would be longer
diverted by your game of cards.
It became late, and fearing
that you had already returned

and found her gone without permission,
 we sent one of the servants
 to find out, and he came back,
 saying that you were already home,
 that you had already missed Leonor,
 had put two and two together, made five,
 and were looking for her, highly aggrieved.
 On hearing that, she was fearful,
 and did not wish to return to your house.

That is the sum of the events:

I did not take Leonor, nor could I,
 seeking as I do to take that beauty as my wife,
 have acted in such a careless manner.

Would I really wish to cloud the mirror
 before seeing myself reflected in it?

Sir, to prove that this is not an excuse

I have invented to avoid marriage,

I offer my word of honour

that I will become her husband at once.

Let that be proof

that there is no impediment

to my becoming hers...

other than my not deserving her hand.

DON CARLOS: Did you hear that, Castaño?

Life and reason gone in one fell swoop!

CASTAÑO: The life bit's news to me.

Your reason took flight a while ago.

DON RODRIGO: Don Pedro, I do not wish

to respond to what you say,

nor to say whether

it could have been thus.

But since your courtship of Leonor

is well known to all,

and she is missing

and I am looking for her,

and I have found her in your house,

my honour will not be satisfied

until you are married.
Whether Leonor wishes it or not
is not an impediment,
for she can have no desire other
than to obey my command.
So call her and you will see
how quickly I put this in order.

DON PEDRO: I fear, Sir, that Leonor will be alarmed,
and so I ask you to give me time,
so that my sister can propose it first.
For since I am ready to be married,
and it is my great fortune to do so,
what difference can it make
to wait until tomorrow,
which will allow me to invite
my friends and relatives to the wedding?
And also to take Leonor to your house,
where the wedding will be held.

DON RODRIGO: Very well. But remember
that we have an agreement,
and that Leonor will be your wife.

DON PEDRO: It is my greatest fortune to know it.

DON RODRIGO: Well, my son, goodbye, for I too must make
arrangements.

DON PEDRO: Sir, let us go together. I am at your service.

DON RODRIGO: No need. You stay here. You need the time.

DON PEDRO: I must accompany you.

DON RODRIGO: Indeed you must not.

DON PEDRO: In that case, I obey.

DON JUAN: Don Pedro, God bless you.

DON PEDRO: Go with God, Don Juan.

DON RODRIGO and DON JUAN exit.

I am so confused,
 I do not know
 if I am sad
 or happy,
 if this is fortune,
 or humiliation.
 Don Rodrigo begs me
 to marry Leonor,
 and Leonor is mine.
 Such are things
 that I cannot refuse the marriage.
 My only fear
 is that Leonor will say no.
 But perhaps Leonor,
 seeing the state of things,
 will follow her father's command
 and become mine.
 I must go.
 Love! Soften her heart!

DON PEDRO exits.

Scene Twelve

DON CARLOS and CASTAÑO.

DON CARLOS: I cannot be conscious, Castaño,
 though I'm not dead.
 God help me!
 Don Rodrigo believes
 that Don Pedro took Leonor,
 and he, all false smiles and pleasantness,
 agrees to marry her,
 undeterred by the minor detail
 that she ran away with another man!

CASTAÑO: What do you expect?
 On one hand, the man's a good catch,
 on the other, women are all easy prey to him.

He sees the bird in flight,
lures her in for the kill.
End of story for you.

DON CARLOS: I am going out of my mind, Castaño.
What can I do?

CASTAÑO: I've got the perfect remedy.
And the perfect revenge.
Fair Doña Ana's rich,
and she's obviously got her eye set on you.
So, seduce her, and you win all round:
that idiot'll be worse than damned,
he'll be in-lawed *in aeternum*.

DON CARLOS: Sweet revenge indeed! Now why didn't I think
of that?

CASTAÑO: You don't like it?
You've obviously no idea
what it's like to have
a mother-in-law,
a father-in-law,
a brother-in-law,
a maiden aunt,
a rented donkey,
or an actor
in the family.
Nothing in hell matches that!

DON CARLOS: Scoundrel! I'm in despair! What am I to do?
Oh, Leonor, if I lose you, I lose my life!

CASTAÑO: No need to lose a hair on your pretty head, Sir.
Let's go and find her,
and in the supreme court
of Leonor's taste and discretion,
have this ruling revoked.

DON CARLOS: And if her father forces her?

CASTAÑO: How can he force her?
What is he, some kind of Tarquinius?

No, let's find her,
and if she's at odds with Daddy,
we'll be evens with Don Pedro.

DON CARLOS: You're right, Castaño. Let's go.

CASTAÑO: Yes, let's be off, enough of this moaning.

(Aside.

It's been a long day.

I think we need a break.)

End of the Second Day

DAY THREE

Scene One

CELIA and DOÑA LEONOR enter.

DOÑA LEONOR: Celia, if you do not
let me out of this house,
or free me from this spell,
I shall kill myself.

CELIA: Beautiful Leonor, calm down.
Think of your reputation.

DOÑA LEONOR: My reputation? When I've just heard
the spine-chilling news that my father
wants me to marry Don Pedro,
mistakenly believing
that it was he I ran away with. Good God!
And when you've just told me
that Don Carlos, my faithless lover,
is wooing Doña Ana, and wishes to marry her?

CELIA: *(Aside.*

It's all true, I did say all that,
and I've got Don Carlos confused
with the same tricky plot,
because my mistress ordered me
to persuade Leonor
that Don Pedro's the man for her.
Then she can have Don Carlos for herself.
I could see that her mind was made up,
her offering me a dress and all,
so I'm making sure she gets her way.)
My Lady, since you know
that faithless Don Carlos has left you,
and my master, Don Pedro, worships you,
and your father wants him to be your husband,

and that things are such
 that if you refuse to marry
 you will lose your honour
 and your place in society,
 shouldn't you think it through
 and resolve to face this wedding with good grace?
 Won't there be a thousand benefits?
 Won't you be welding together
 the broken pieces of your reputation,
 obeying your father,
 pleasing your kin,
 rewarding him who loves you,
 and avenging yourself on Don Carlos?

DOÑA LEONOR: What are you saying, Celia?
 Before I give myself to Don Pedro
 you will see the stars
 freed from their heavenly vaults,
 the fiercest seas will break free
 from the unviolated will
 imposed upon them by the sand;
 you will see the body of the globe destroyed
 by the fiery heart of the Sphere that gives it life;
 the great order of Nature will be overturned,
 fire will freeze ice,
 ice will spark and burn.
 Before I stop belonging to Don Carlos –
 though the ungrateful man may despise me –
 I will become my own executioner.
 Before I stop loving him...

CELIA: Okay, okay. Enough before, I'm with you.
 Let's get on with it, since your mind's made up.
 I'm not offering any more advice.
 Just tell me what you intend to do.

DOÑA LEONOR: My friend, my intention is
 that you help me
 to escape from this house,
 so that when my father returns

he does not find me here
and force me to the altar.
I will go from here,
and in a convent cell
seek a corner to bury myself,
where I may weep of my sorrows
and lament my misfortunes
for what remains of my life.
And perhaps, hidden there,
the star of my destiny
will lose sight of me.

CELIA: And what do you see in the stars for me?
Can you read mine so well?
If I show you the door,
I'll be seeing stars when my master finds out.

DOÑA LEONOR: My friend, do this one small thing for me,
and I will be your slave for all eternity.

CELIA: That's all very well,
but I'll be the one
paying for it for all eternity.

DOÑA LEONOR: Good heavens, enemy,
if you do not let me out
I shall kill myself
and you too!

CELIA: (*Aside.*
Such fire and fury!
What shall I do?
If I don't let her go,
and she becomes my mistress
there'll be hell to pay.
But if I let her go,
my master will kill me.
Better to humour her,
and warn my master of his lady's intentions;
once he knows, he'll stop her
and I'll be in both their good books.

That way, she won't take offence
 and he'll be forever in my debt.)
 Well, my Lady, if it's come to that,
 and you're so determined,
 go and find your cloak,
 and I'll guard the door.

DOÑA LEONOR: You have given me back my life, Celia.

CELIA: I am of a tender heart, my Lady.

The mere sight of tears and I melt like butter.

DOÑA LEONOR: I'll go for my cloak.

CELIA: But be quick. I'll wait here.

DOÑA LEONOR exits.

I'll do no such thing,
 but lock the door,
 and go and warn Marsilio
 that his Melisandra has fled.

CELIA exits.

Scene Two

DON JUAN enters.

DON JUAN: With the key to the garden
 – which Celia left in my possession
 as the means to pursue my happiness –
 I shall discover the source of my grief.
 Yet, how wrong to say discover,
 for how can clear evidence
 now be called doubt?
 I only wish to God
 that my grievance and jealousy
 were still mere suspicions.
 But dare I risk dishonour?
 For my honour may well be threatened
 and yet I cannot take revenge.

If supposition alone offends me,
what is my honour to do,
when doubt is, very possibly,
real evidence of my grievance?
And in the noble classes,
the slightest evidence of offence,
even while only suspicion,
must be read as true doubt.
For, since honour is sullied
by mere suspicion,
he who doubts the evidence of the truth
faces dishonour for sure.

But, if that's the case, how can I
imagine that I can be offended,
when though my mind is full of doubt
it refuses to contemplate that offence?
I shall wait in hiding
until my rival comes.
For who can doubt,
given the state of affairs,
that he who boldly comes by day
will also make free by night?
I shall wait inside.
Honour, stoke the flames of my revenge!

DON JUAN exits.

Scene Three

DON CARLOS and CASTAÑO, carrying a bundle, enter.

DON CARLOS: I've been all over the house
and haven't found her.
I am beyond despair.

CASTAÑO: But, my Lord, didn't you see
those locked doors?
Don't you get it?
You're trapped in a plot!

Doña Ana and her brother
have locked us in
to force you into holy matrimony!

DON CARLOS: Castaño, I have resolved
that Don Rodrigo should know
that it was I who took his daughter
and who wishes to be her husband.
For if he now thinks it was Don Pedro,
and is ordering them to marry,
he will, by the same token, give her to me
when he discovers the truth.

CASTAÑO: Impressively reasoned, I must say.
But how can you get out of here
with Doña Ana on guard duty?
I'll bet she never sleeps on the job.

DON CARLOS: It would be easy for me to leave against her will.
I'm not one to have my suffering constrained like this.
My only worry and fear for my honour
is leaving Leonor alone in this house,
where anything could happen.
So, I thought that you could deliver this letter,
in which I tell Don Rodrigo everything.
After all, no one will take any notice of you.

CASTAÑO: Santa Tecla! You expect me to go
while you stand by and watch,
and I get picked up for being your side-kick
in the fight that left Don Diego dying?
Am I to pay the consequences of your crime?

DON CARLOS: You have heard my wish, Castaño.

CASTAÑO: Yes, but it is not to my pleasing.

DON CARLOS: Good heavens, you will do as I say!

CASTAÑO: My Lord, it doesn't quite add up, does it?
You get to live and I get to die.

DON CARLOS: Is this a joke, Castaño?

CASTAÑO: I am in earnest, Sir.

DON CARLOS: You're trying my patience, Castaño.
Good God, man, you will do it or I will kill you.

CASTAÑO: My Lord, unhand me.

I see this is all very pressing,
and either way I'm at risk, I grant,
but maybe better out than in.
Give me the letter. I'll go.

DON CARLOS: Take it, and be sure to come back quickly.

CASTAÑO: Allow me, my Lord, to tell you a story

I'm suddenly reminded of.

This matador's off to a bullfight
and asks a man for his horse.

The man doesn't want to lend it
but he can't refuse.

Off the matador goes and the owner,
who can't bear to watch,
shouts after him,

'Look after the horse,
it's worth a fortune.'

The matador, not at all perturbed, answers,
'Tell that to the bull, not to me.'

That's you now, Sir, sending me on an errand,
much against my wishes,
knowing I might not return.

And what makes me laugh,
pitiful though it may be,
is that you order me to come back quickly,
which, you must accept, is not very likely.

So I say to you, like the bullfighter,
tell that to Don Rodrigo, not to me.

CELIA enters.

CELIA: Don Carlos, my mistress asks

that you go to see her in the garden this instant.

She has a matter of some importance to discuss with you.

DON CARLOS: Tell her I am at her command.
(Aside to CASTAÑO.
 Do as you are bid.)

DON CARLOS and CELIA exit.

Scene Four

CASTAÑO: I wish I didn't have to do this.
 I wouldn't if I could get out of it.
 I'd invent something.
 Good God, how am I supposed
 to give this letter to Don Rodrigo,
 without him or anyone else
 knowing who I am?
 If only I were the great pretender, Garatuza,
 beloved patron saint of my home land in the Indies,
 and of servants in a fix,
 the greatest escape artist of them all, bless him.
 Oh, someone, somewhere, anyone, anywhere,
 some kind man – or even a woman –
 whether you wield a fan,
 or parade with a sword,
 inspire me with a 'Calderónian' twist of the plot
 to get me out of this mess.
 But, by God! On my conscience!
 I've struck on a way!
 Leonor gave me her dresses and jewels
 when she was playing Helen
 to that baby-faced Paris,
 and I've got them all here –
 they've been my bed for days.
 If I dress up in all this stuff
 no veiled woman in Toledo
 will match my grace and elegance.
 Here we go. Off with these rags.

He takes off his cape, sword and hat.

First, to trap my locks –
it'll take years off me
if I clamp them down a bit.
Let's cover my crown with this cloth.
If I put it on – just so –
it'll set me off a treat.
Now for the skirts.
Sweet Jesus, what beautiful material.
It suits me perfectly –
I'm so dark that blue looks divine on me.
And what's this?
Jewels?
Forget them,
better to dress down, methinks.
Here's a veil,
I'll plant this on me too. That's it.
And will this breast piece fit?
Only make-up – poisonous stuff – to go.
Pray to God for an artful hand
to put it on,
but no,
he pays no heed,
and it's all over my face.
Still, no need for rouge, eh,
a lady in disgrace,
in a mess like this
is bound to turn
a thousand shades of red.
And what do you think,
ladies and gentlemen,
of this corset?
Corset and petticoats – me at my best.
I really am beautiful.
Good God, but I'm gorgeous.
I'm of such a fine mould
everything looks a treat on me.
Now for the final touches,

I'm not quite the perfect lady yet.
Gloves, definitely, to hide my hands:
got to make them as smooth as Jacob's,
though I'm more of an Esau myself.
The cloak is the key.
Gently does it, over my head.
Good grief, how well this silk cloth conceals!
Have you ever, ladies and gentleman, seen
a pit as bottomless,
a wall as sturdy,
a thief as light-fingered,
a page as conniving,
a gipsy as cunning,
a profiteer as profiteering?

This fan is the image of my grace and beauty.
But maybe I still shine through?
Do you think it's still a bit too much like me?
For sure there'll be some woman out there
who'll say to her companion,
'Mariquita, this fool's a fraud.'
But pay attention, ladies and gentlemen,
this is all part of the play.
Don't think I've concocted it all on my own.
I have no wish to deceive you,
least of all our eminent visitors from out of town.
Well, I'm ready. And what's the bet
that four thousand of those idiots
that chase anything that walks
will fall over each other to get at me;
not with the beauty that I am,
but with the beauty they think I am.
Now, let's get on with being a Lady.
Small steps, graceful and elegant.
Wriggle, wriggle, side to side,
head inclined, hand concealed in the cloak,
one eye veiled, the other not.
My beauty's wasted in these cloisters.

Yet still I fear that someone
will fall head over heels for me.

He goes to exit and encounters DON PEDRO.

Scene Five

DON PEDRO: Beautiful Leonor.

Where are you going in your cloak at this hour?

(Aside.

Celia did well to tell me
that Leonor was fleeing to a convent!)

Where are you off to in such a hurry?

CASTAÑO: *(Aside.*

Good God! He takes me for Leonor!

I must have got it spot on
if he wants to unveil me.)

DON PEDRO: Why so silent, Leonor?

Where are you going, my Leonor?

CASTAÑO: *(Aside.*

Hark at his Leonoring.

Leonor this, Leonor that!

If he's so sure I'm Leonor

I'll pretend to be her.

Maybe if I change my voice
he won't understand me.)

DON PEDRO: Why don't you answer, my Lady?

Is my love not worthy of response?

Why do you wish to leave my house?

Is it an offence to love you so purely,
to be so truly in love with you

that, even knowing you love another,

I am so attentive to your obligations,
your honour and all you have at stake,

that, come what may,

I am determined to marry you? .

In your situation it is surely more becoming
 to protect your duty rather than your desires?
 Can it be possible that you are not moved
 by my nobility, my character, and my estate
 to treat me less severely?
 Am I so unworthy, my Lady?
 And if that is the case,
 do my displays of love
 not afford me some recognition?
 Considered wisely:
 is it not better to have for a husband
 an ungallant man who loves you
 than a gallant man who despises you?

CASTAÑO: (*Aside.*

What a great thing to be buttered up like this.
 No wonder women are all so stuck-up.
 All this begging would turn anyone's head.
 Time to give this fool the run around.)
 Don Pedro, I would prefer not to impart
 the real reason for my departure,
 but since you oblige me, I'm off because
 your meanness is starving me to death.
 You're a miserable git,
 your sister's a mare,
 the maid servants are old hags,
 the man servants are all pigs,
 and I've had it up to here!
 I'm off to a cake shop for some cream buns.

DON PEDRO: (*Aside.*

What is this I hear? Such language!
 Is this really the brilliant and beautiful Doña Leonor?)
 My lady, I am greatly confused
 by such insults against my noble family.
 If you want to discourage me,
 you could try by other means,
 and not with these words,
 which do you little justice.

CASTAÑO: Let me be clear: you are starving me to death.
Or is that double Dutch to you?

DON PEDRO: It is not double Dutch, my Lady,
but I do not understand you
when you use such language.

CASTAÑO: Well, if you do not understand that,
see if you understand this.

CASTAÑO makes to go.

DON PEDRO: Stop! You must not go.
I cannot allow you to leave.
I've told your father that you are here,
and in a short time
I must give him proof of your presence.
Even if you do not wish to marry me,
it'll be easier for me
if he sees that the resistance
to marriage comes not from me, but you.

CASTAÑO: Don Pedro, you are an imbecile,
and you are taking a great liberty
stopping a woman in my position
from going out to stuff her belly.

DON PEDRO: (*Aside.*
Heavens! Can it be possible
that this is really Doña Leonor speaking?
Good Lord, I do believe
that she's acting the fool
to get rid of me
and stop our marriage.
Good heavens, she must abhor me!
And yet, my passion is so blind
that nothing can diminish it.)
Beautiful Leonor. This is beneath your dignity.
What can you gain from acting so foolishly?
Yet, your ingenuity fires my love still more –
how skilfully you play the fool...
I'm head over heels in love.

CASTAÑO: (*Aside.*

What a tight fix, by God!
He looks ready to force himself on me.
Better to change tactics,
and see if he'll leave me be.)
Don Pedro, I am a woman
who knows very well
which side her bread is buttered on,
and since I can see that your love
withstands my snubs,
I'll turn full circle,
put the shoe on the other foot,
and be your wife tonight.

DON PEDRO: My Lady? What did you say?

CASTAÑO: That I'll be yours.

As sure as two and two make four.

DON PEDRO: Not so quickly.

Or happiness will kill me
where sorrow failed.

CASTAÑO: No, my Lord, for the love of God,
don't kick the bucket
without leaving me a son to inherit the fortune!

DON PEDRO: Is that what you're worried about?
Don't you realise that it will all be yours?

CASTAÑO: Gracious. Really? I see.

It'll be so good to be rolling in riches.

DON PEDRO: It will be my pleasure. But, my Lady,
are you speaking the truth,
or toying with my life?

CASTAÑO: What do you take me for? A rogue?
I give you my word
that I shall marry you,
that is, if you are not opposed.

DON PEDRO: Me, my Lady?

CASTAÑO: What do you bet that,
when push comes to shove,
you'll get cold feet?

DON PEDRO: Do not insult my good name, my Lady.

CASTAÑO: Well, give me your word right here and now
that, if you back out, you won't take it out on me.

DON PEDRO: What does it matter
that I offer you my word
when it's impossible
for my feelings to change?
And since you agree to be my wife,
give me your beautiful hand as your pledge.

CASTAÑO: (*Aside.*
Oops. Jacob comes fast to mind.)
Take a look. It's all there.

DON PEDRO: You offer me your hand in a glove?

CASTAÑO: Yes, it's in a bad way. Diseased.

DON PEDRO: But what's wrong with your hands?

CASTAÑO: They got damaged...visiting one day.
I've tried all sorts of remedies...bile, toilet soap...
you name it, I've tried it, but nothing
can return them to their former whiteness.

Inside. Offstage. DON JUAN.

DON JUAN: You will die at my hands, traitor!

DON PEDRO: Whose voice was that?

Inside. Offstage. DON CARLOS.

DON CARLOS: No! You will die at mine, villain,
since you seek your death at them!

DON PEDRO: Good God, what's going on in my house?

CASTAÑO: They're getting closer.

Scene Six

DON CARLOS and DON JUAN enter, fighting, with DOÑA ANA trying to stop them.

DOÑA ANA: Gentlemen, stop!
(*Aside.*

What's this? My brother! I'm lost!)

CASTAÑO: What's this?

Are those that celebrate my beauty
at daggers drawn?

DON PEDRO: What's this shameless fighting
in my house at these hours?

I will avenge this outrage!

I'll kill them both.

Don Carlos first!

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

Curses! Who would have thought
that my brother would be here?)

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

Don Pedro is here,
which is nothing to me,
but Doña Ana is in danger,
and only for her do I hesitate.)

CASTAÑO: There's going to be a bloodbath here.

I know, I'll snuff out the candle,
maybe that way I can reach the door.

That's all that matters.

CASTAÑO puts out the candle and they all fight.

DON PEDRO: Well may you put out the candle
to escape my anger,

But little good does it do you:

even in darkness I shall kill you.

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

This the perfect chance to free Doña Ana,
who, after all, is risking her life to save me.)

DOÑA LEONOR enters, wearing a cloak.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

My God! I leave Celia for a moment,
and come back to the sound of swords.

I'm walking in darkness.

What's going on?

God help me!

Yet, no matter,

my only interest is to get to the door.)

She bumps into DON CARLOS.

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

This must be Doña Ana.)

My Lady, come with me quickly,
and I'll take you to safety.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

What's this?

A man's taking me away!

But as long as he gets me out of here,

I'll go with anyone happily.

And if he's mistaken me for someone else,
when he sees me in the light

he can leave me

and return to save her.)

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

I don't care if my brother's seen the brawl,
especially when he's spotted Don Carlos.

I'll just say the fighting is over Leonor.

I'm only fearful that Don Carlos
is putting himself at risk.

If only I could bump into him,
then I could hide him again.)

DON PEDRO: He who dares to offend my honour will die!

CASTAÑO: I've lost my way.

I can't find the door!

Ah, this must be it here.

But, Jesus, what's this?

What closet have I stuck my snout in?

DOÑA ANA: I heard a noise at the door.

Don Juan must be leaving

so as not to be seen

or recognised by my brother.

Now there's only two fighting,

which one could be Don Carlos?

DONÑA ANA bumps into DON JUAN.

DON CARLOS: This must be the door.

My Lady, let's be gone from here.

DON CARLOS exits with DONÑA LEONOR.

DON PEDRO: You will die a painful death at my hands.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

That is my brother, so this must be Don Carlos.)

Hurry, My Lord, I will hide you.

DON JUAN: This must be Doña Ana,

trying to hide me from her brother.

I must obey.

DONÑA ANA exits with DON JUAN.

DON PEDRO: So you hide, traitors and cowards,

in fear of my sword!

Hey! Bring some light!

CELIA enters, with a candle.

Scene Seven

CELIA: My Lord, what's happening? What's the racket?

DON PEDRO: Can't you see for yourself?

(*Aside.*

But what's this?

They've found an open door and fled!

But if Leonor – Don Carlos must have
come looking for her – is still here,
why worry? But still, it would be good
to know how he got in.)
Leonor, go inside and compose yourself,
while I go for your father.
I want this wedding to be over with tonight.

CASTAÑO: Well, I'll tell you what I want...

CASTAÑO exits with DON PEDRO, who locks the door.

DON PEDRO: I'll lock Leonor in,
in case she's shown me favour
out of cunning.
I'll lock and bolt it
just in case she's faking,
then the joke will be on her.
Meanwhile, I must discover
who let my rival, Don Carlos, into my house,
and why he was fighting
that cloaked man.
My sister saw them before I did,
and she left with them,
so, for my honour and hers,
I must find out
when the fight began,
where she was,
and how she got there.

DON PEDRO exits.

Scene Eight

Outside DON PEDRO's house.

DON RODRIGO and HERNANDO enter.

DON RODRIGO: Hernando, I have discovered
that Don Diego was stabbed

and left almost dead.

In this state he was carried home,
where he came round.

But he had seen his rescuers
and recognised them as Don Pedro's servants.

Now, how does that story fit
with what he told me today
about Leonor visiting his sister,
and how I should wait 'til the morning
to see if Leonor wishes to marry him?

All of which suggests to me
that he is stalling,
and has no intention of marrying her.
But I have returned to his house
resolved to enforce his destiny:
which is that he will marry her, or die.

HERNANDO: You do well, My Lord,
For the debts of honour
must be paid in full.
He who betrays it foolishly
will find himself terminally ill.

Scene Nine

DON CARLOS with DOÑA LEONOR in a cloak.

DON CARLOS: You need fear danger no longer, beautiful Doña Ana.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

Good Heavens, Don Carlos has rescued me,
thinking – fierce enemy! – that I am Doña Ana.
What greater proof do I need that he loves her?)

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

God Almighty, what a mess I've got myself into.
I've put Leonor in danger in order to free Doña Ana.
Where can I take her,
so that I can return posthaste

and free Leonor?

But, wait, I see a man approaching.)

Who goes there?

DON RODRIGO: Is that Don Carlos?

DON CARLOS: It is I.

(Aside.

Thank heavens! It's Don Rodrigo!

Who better to protect Doña Ana?

In his wisdom he will return her to her brother,

and I will be free of this embarrassment,

and can go to the rescue of my dear Lady.)

My Lord, Don Rodrigo,

I find myself in a difficulty,

and only you can help me.

DON RODRIGO: How can I serve you, Don Carlos?

DON CARLOS: This Lady I have with me

is the sister of Don Pedro.

As a result of a quarrel,

and because her honour was in danger,

I had to get her out of her house.

You will understand that it is not decent

for her to be alone in my company,

so I beg you to take her to your house

while I attend to another matter.

DON RODRIGO: Don Carlos, I will look after her,
for you, of course, cannot.

And I will speak to her brother,
if you wish me to.

DON CARLOS: You would do me a great favour,
And now I must be gone.

DON CARLOS exits.

Scene Ten

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

What's going on?

He's handed me over to my father!)

DON RODRIGO: Hernando, this is opportune.

Here I am, about to see Don Pedro,

when Carlos confesses he has committed

a similar offence: he has eloped

with Don Pedro's sister,

and I do believe he loves her.

I shall use this as my means

of making sure that they marry.

For I must protect Don Pedro's honour

as if he were my own son.

Perhaps he will be humbled

at seeing his own honour at risk,

and will want to save mine.

HERNANDO: Well said. It seems to me

that not handing over his sister

until he has kept his promise to you

is the perfect way of compelling him

to keep his word.

DON RODRIGO: I shall enter.

Come with me, my Lady,

and fear no danger,

for I am determined

to see you come out of this well.

Scene Eleven

In DON PEDRO's house.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

My father has returned me

to the house of my enemy,

and I must follow him,
for I cannot reveal myself!)

DON RODRIGO: There's Don Pedro. My Lady,
stay here with Hernando
while I speak with your brother.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*
Heavenly stars, change your unholy influence,
or kill me now, for a swift end,
no matter how dreadful,
will be kinder than eternal martyrdom!)

DON RODRIGO: I must greet him.

Scene Twelve

DON PEDRO enters.

DON PEDRO: (*Aside.*
How is it I could not find my sister,
or discover who let my enemy into my house?
I'll look for her in the garden.
Perhaps, scared by the noise,
she came to these chambers.
But, is that Don Rodrigo?
He's come at a good time,
now that Leonor's said
she'll be my wife.)
Welcome, my Lord.
Perfect timing,
I was going this very moment
to look for you.

DON RODRIGO: I appreciate your diligence.
Let us sit down,
for we have a lot to discuss.

DON PEDRO: (*Aside.*
I have a feeling that what's coming
will be to my pleasing.)

DON RODRIGO: You may have guessed, Don Pedro,
that what has brought me to this house is honour,
since mine is in your hands.

As you know,
honour is such a precious gem
that all noble and worthy men
must protect it at all costs.
Honour is a crystal so finely polished
that though a blow to its perfection
might not break it,
breath alone will sully it.

No doubt, Don Pedro, you share this view.
Now, since you are to be my son-in-law,
it is to my advantage
to see your honour protected.
See how jealous I am of my honour,
see how I guard my good name
by jealously protecting yours?
Now, my son, given all of this,
you are aware
that Don Carlos de Olmedo,
as well as being of noble stock
and illustrious inheritance...

DON PEDRO: (*Aside.*
He's just named Don Carlos in my presence.
Where is this leading?
And he's not even mentioned marriage.
Doubtless he's found out that Don Carlos
is the one who fled with Leonor.
Today I lose my honour and my life.)

DON RODRIGO: The colour has fled your cheeks,
and I am not surprised,
for you would not be noble or wise,
if you did not pale
at any threat to your honour.
But you are the perfect example
of the trials of love,

and your own guilt
makes honest another's offence;
you should not be shocked
by those that share your sins.

Scene Thirteen

Enter DOÑA ANA to the wings.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

Is that Leonor's father with my brother?
I will try to hear why he came here.
For though I've got Don Carlos hidden,
my brother did see him,
and now I fear the worst.)

DON RODRIGO: I am bound to tell you,
though you may already know,
that Don Carlos has courted your sister,
and she responds to his love...
It was not long ago, after all,
that the same happened
between you and Leonor.

DON PEDRO: What's this? Good heavens!
Don Carlos loves my sister?
What are you saying?

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

How on earth could he have known that?)

DON RODRIGO: I have no wish to waste time
by explaining what you already know.
Finding himself in a difficult position
after you had seen him
and fought with him,
Don Carlos took your sister
from your house.

DON PEDRO: What are you saying?

DON RODRIGO: Only what you already know.

Don't you see that you offended me
in the very same way,
and I sought to treat it calmly?
Do the Heavens not decree
that what we do unto others
will be done unto us?
Why, then, are you so enraged?
Take my advice, my son:
in affairs of honour, harsh medicine
is not always the best remedy:
mild medicine is often the swiftest cure.
If a limb is damaged
the expert surgeon does not
immediately apply the knife
and cut it off,
but first applies gentle remedies,
only turning to drastic measures
when there is no other resort.
Let us do the same here:
Don Carlos has spoken to me;
Doña Ana escaped with him
and is now in my power.
They wanted to marry without you,
but, is it not better that you willingly offer
your wise and affectionate blessing?
It would reflect well on you
if you dress necessity in the cloak of affection.
That is my opinion. It is for you
to consult your honour calmly,
and see if I am not correct.
Now. Turning to matters that concern me:
I have come here
resolved to have you married tonight.
There is no reason to delay,
for I have just found out that your story was false,
and I will only be satisfied when you are married.

DOÑA ANA: (*Aside.*

I tremble to know what my brother will answer.
But why on earth would Don Rodrigo
invent these complicated stories?)

DON PEDRO: Sir, first of all...

saying that I did not run away with Leonor
was a lie to guard my dignity and honour,
and your good name. And since you say
that I can only be redeemed
when I marry, I offer my hand now,
as husband and master
of the beautiful Leonor,
who is hidden in that room.

But first you must hand over Doña Ana,
so that, following your advice,
I can marry her to Don Carlos at once.

(*Aside.*

That way I can get rid of my rival.)

DON RODRIGO: How well you demonstrate your wisdom and
nobility.

I shall call for your sister, and I thank you.

Scene Fourteen

DOÑA ANA enters.

DOÑA ANA: There is no need to, Don Rodrigo.

I am here, and ready to do as I must.

And you, my brother, I ask you

to examine in your heart

the violent excesses of love,

and pardon all my errors,

if such sweet folly can bear that name.

DON PEDRO: Rise, Doña Ana. I shall give you an honest wedding,
though you could have acted more decently.

DON RODRIGO: Stop. This is no time for rebukes.
Send one of your servants for Don Carlos.

DOÑA ANA: There is no need to send for him.

He is hidden, as my husband, in my chambers.

DON PEDRO: Well, get him out of there immediately.

DOÑA ANA: With what pleasure I obey.

At last my persistent lover
has won his heart's desires.

DOÑA ANA exits.

DON PEDRO: Celia!

CELIA enters.

CELIA: Your desire, Sir?

DON PEDRO: Take the key to this room
and tell Leonor to come out.

Oh Love, after all my longing
you have granted
my most cherished desires!

CELIA takes the key and exits.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

Since they think I am Doña Ana
I will hide here
and free myself from my father,
who is the greatest danger.

I'll find another means later
of escaping Don Pedro's clutches.
But I see a man coming up the stairs.
Who could it be?)

Scene Fifteen

DON CARLOS enters.

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*

I have come back, resolved
to free Leonor from her captivity,
come what may.

Now that Doña Ana is out of danger,
there is no reason
to hide the true colour of my valour.
By heavens, I'll take her with me,
or leave this place dead!)

DON CARLOS passes in front of DOÑA LEONOR.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

My God! It's Carlos!
And he's so blind with rage
that he has not seen me.
But why has he come back,
when he saved me,
thinking I was Doña Ana?
Oh heavens, what have you done to me
that I meekly allow such outrage?
But, what if he has realised
that he had left his lady – me! –
in a terrible plight,
and has come to her – my! – rescue?
I'll go closer and hear what he has to say.)

DON CARLOS: Don Pedro, when I enter my enemy's house
I cannot pretend to be courteous.
I have come here on... But what's this?
Why is Don Rodrigo here?

DON RODRIGO: Stop, Carlos, and calm yourself.
The whole affair is resolved.
You are in Don Pedro's favour,
and since you owe it all to him,
you should show him your gratitude.
I congratulate you
on becoming the happy master
of the beauty you adore.
May your happiness be eternal.

DON CARLOS: (*Aside.*
What's all this about?
He must know everything

because Castaño's given him the letter,
and, knowing now that I carried Leonor off,
he wishes to act properly and give her to me,
and no doubt Don Pedro, defeated,
has desisted from his persistence.)
My Lord, what can I say?
But let my joy excuse my folly,
for in such a state of happiness
I would not be sane if I did not go mad.

DON RODRIGO: Didn't I say you could trust me?
Love her and treat her well.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*
But what am I hearing?
What are these congratulations?
And what's Carlos so happy about?)

DON PEDRO: Sir, you should have shown
more respect for my noble home,
but since this is to Don Rodrigo's liking,
I consider myself privileged
that such a great gentleman
should honour my house.

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*
I can suffer this no more.
The traitor will not marry.)

DOÑA LEONOR enters, in a cloak.

DON RODRIGO: My Lady, just in time.
But why have you put your cloak on again?
Here is your husband.
Don Carlos, enough of the formalities.
Give Doña Ana your hand.

DON CARLOS: Who? What is this?

DON RODRIGO: Doña Ana. Your wife. But what's the matter?

DON CARLOS: This is treachery and deceit!
Marry Doña Ana? Me?

DOÑA LEONOR: (*Aside.*

Glory be to God! He despises Doña Ana!)

DON PEDRO: Don Rodrigo, what is this?

Did you not, on behalf of Don Carlos,
come to an agreement about my sister?

DON RODRIGO: Of course I did. Don Carlos himself

handed your sister over to me,
saying that her life was in danger.
My Lady, is that not the case?

DOÑA LEONOR: Yes, my Lord, I confess

that I am the wife of Don Carlos,
and that you have had a part in it.

DON CARLOS: You are mistaken, Doña Ana,

to expose yourself to such public humiliation.

But you oblige me to speak harshly to you.

If you pursue me so persistently

you must suffer my rudeness,

for you, more than anyone,

know that I can only belong to Leonor.

DON RODRIGO: Leonor? What? What's this? What Leonor?

DON CARLOS: Your daughter, Sir. Leonor.

DON RODRIGO: My daughter?

What are you talking about?

She's Don Pedro's wife!

DON CARLOS: I'll take his life before I let him get away with
this!

DON PEDRO: This is too much to endure!

In my presence I hear you

recklessly and disrespectfully

dishonour my sister

and seek to possess the one I love!

Scene Sixteen

They draw swords. DOÑA ANA and DONJUAN enter, hand in hand, and CELIA enters by the other door, with CASTAÑO still dressed as LEONOR.

DOÑA ANA: At your feet, my brother, my husband and I...

(Aside.

But what's this?

I've brought Don Juan.

I didn't recognise him
with his cape over his face.)

DON PEDRO: Doña Ana? What's going on?

CELIA: My Lord, here is Leonor.

DON PEDRO: Ah, my most divine, my most beautiful lady!

CASTAÑO: *(Aside.*

Now you'll see my beauty for what it is,
though I can barely move for fear.

But my master is here,
so no worries, he'll look after me.)

DON RODRIGO: I cannot believe my eyes.

Don Carlos, do you not love Doña Ana,
and was she not the lady
you handed over to me
and whom you are going to marry?

DON CARLOS: This is clearly a trick, for I love only Leonor.

DOÑA ANA: *(Aside.*

Let me be free of this deceit.
All my efforts have come to nought.

Since I must be Don Juan's
I will try as best I can to like him,
for in truth he is my master.)

Don Rodrigo, what are you saying?

Me? Belong to Don Carlos?

I don't understand.

I only know that, since Madrid,

my heart has belonged only to Don Juan,
who commands every thought in my breast.

DON JUAN: Don Pedro, I lie at your feet.

DON PEDRO: It is I who should be happy,
for in you I join friendship with kinship.
And so, let us be married together.
Give Ana your hand, as I offer mine to Leonor.

He approaches CASTAÑO.

DON CARLOS: I will kill you a thousand times first!

CASTAÑO: (*Aside.*

I really must be pretty damn gorgeous
if they're ready to kill each other for me.)

DON PEDRO: Sovereign object, to whom I abandon my will,
give me your hand in marriage.

CASTAÑO: Here, take it. I've had it in kid gloves
to soften it up just for you.

DON CARLOS: You will not do this!

DONÑA LEONOR reveals herself.

DONÑA LEONOR: Stop, Carlos!

I seem to be one too many here,
but I will be your wife.
For, though I felt scorned,
my condition is such
that I love you all the more.

DON CARLOS: My own Leonor, was that you?

DON PEDRO: What's going on here?

Am I by chance dreaming?
Leonor here...and there?

CASTAÑO: No, but, 'I am greatly confused by your words,'
might be the clue you're looking for...

DON PEDRO: So who are you, marvellous woman,
that I mistook you for Leonor?

CASTAÑO reveals himself.

CASTAÑO: Me? I'm merely the dead goat
from which the gloves were cut...

CELIA: What a joker!

DON PEDRO: By God, I'll kill you!

CASTAÑO: Why? I gave you my word
that I would marry you,
and now I'm ready to go through with it.
We agreed that if I stood by you,
you would do me no harm,
and here I am standing by you,
ready for holy matrimony.
Do not forsake me, my darling –
I'll not go back on my promise.

DON CARLOS: What are you doing here dressed like that?

CASTAÑO: It was like this: to take the letter
(which I still have here, by the way),
in which you tell Don Rodrigo
about the whole mess
and how you took Leonor –
I put on this outfit
to escape being caught,
whereupon, Don Pedro was so bowled over
by my good looks, grace and elegance,
that he locked me into this room.

DON CARLOS: You see, Don Rodrigo,
how it's true that I am the real master
of the beautiful Leonor,
and so must be her husband?

DON RODRIGO: As long as Leonor is married
and my honour is not at risk,
nothing else matters.
And so, Don Carlos,
I am happy to have won
a son such as you.

DON PEDRO: (*Aside.*

I am so utterly taken aback
at what has happened to me
that I am speechless.

But, since there's no way out,
I must put on a brave face.)

Sir, I bow graciously to the mockery
that has been made of me

so that my sister can marry Don Juan.

DOÑA ANA: I offer my hand and heart, and with it my soul.

DON JUAN: And I, my Lady, accept,
for I know I repay like with like.

DON CARLOS: My Leonor, give me your hand.

DOÑA LEONOR: It has always been yours.

CASTAÑO: Whisper me something sweet, Celia,
and see if you've got a hand at hand for me.

CELIA: I'm afraid I haven't. But will a finger do?

CASTAÑO: Bless my soul, it certainly will.

We don't want to stand out like sore thumbs.

Put it here, my dear.

And here, most worthy gentlemen,

and here, most discreet ladies,

House of Desires ends.

Forgive its faults and give it a big hand.

End of the Third Day

[illegible]

SOR JUANA INÉS DE LA CRUZ

House of Desires

IN A NEW TRANSLATION BY CATHERINE BOYLE

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